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Saturday February 3 1996

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Albania L 2.20	Hungary F 2.00	Poland Z 5.70
Andorra P 1.10	India IN 1.85	Portugal E 2.20
Australia AS 2.8	Indonesia ID 1.50	Romania R 1.00
Austria O 2.00	Iran IR 2.50	Saudi Arabia R 1.00
Belgium BF 2.00	Israel IS 2.00	Slovenia SI 2.00
Bulgaria B 1.70	Jordan JO 1.00	Slovakia SK 1.00
Canada CA 1.00	Korea KR 2.00	Spain S 1.00
Cyprus CE 1.00	Latvia LV 1.00	Sweden SK 1.00
Czech Republic KC 4.5	Lithuania LT 1.00	Switzerland SF 3
Denmark DK 1.0	Luxembourg LF 5.5	Taiwan TW 1.00
Dubai D 3.50	Malaysia MY 1.00	Thailand TH 1.00
Egypt E 1.00	Malta MT 1.00	Turkey TR 1.00
Finland FI 1.00	Mexico M 1.00	Ukraine UA 2.00
France FR 1.00	Netherlands NL 1.00	USA US 2.75
Germany DE 1.50	Norway NK 1.00	Zimbabwe ZI 2.00
Greece G 2.50	Oman OR 1.00	

The Guardian

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NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

46,486

Watching Bob Dole die

Twenty-four hours with America's biggest loser



Outlook page 13

Athletics

Sally Gunnell makes comeback

Outlook page 10

Context

Cézanne and Zola

Two childhoods in Provence



Outlook page 19

Campaign of fear hits Ashdown

Threats against Lib Dem leader erupt into arson

Geoffrey Gibbs and Patrick Wintour

SURVEILLANCE on Paddy Ashdown's home is to be stepped up after a concerted campaign of threats against his property culminated in a firebomb attack yesterday which destroyed his car.

Police last night arrested three men, aged 18, 19 and 21, in connection with the attack. All three are from Yeovil, in Mr Ashdown's constituency.

The attack took place at the Liberal Democrat leader's home in the Somerset village of Norton sub Hamdon. It emerged before the arrests were made that anonymous telephone threats had been made to Mr Ashdown's property and London office in the past few weeks.

Police chiefs had discussed with the Yeovil MP measures to tighten security. Surveillance on his property had been quietly increased.

Mr Ashdown had himself taken a threatening call from a man in December. There were no threats to his life, but the calls were being taken very seriously and the MP's protection was a high priority, said Superintendent Ted Allen, the district commander at Yeovil.



The burned-out wreckage of Paddy Ashdown's car

Mr Ashdown has played a much publicised role in exposing a spate of racist attacks on the tiny ethnic community in Yeovil, which is the third largest town in Somerset. But police yesterday were playing down suggestions that the "despicable" attack which destroyed the MP's registered "Vanhal" Senator was racially motivated.

Last month Mr Ashdown's car window was smashed with a stone in what is believed to have been a linked attack.

Mr Allen said: "There is no evidence of a racial motive whatsoever. It is impossible to say what the motive was, but we are keeping an open mind."

Mr Ashdown had not asked for protection, Mr Allen said. But the superintendent added: "It is something I am concerned about. We have spoken about that and that will be ongoing."

Shrugging off the latest incident, Mr Ashdown insisted on business as usual yesterday afternoon when he honoured a commitment to visit a local junior school.

He declined to comment on the possible motives for the arson. "No one was hurt, but obviously we were shaken and now I am just determined to get on with my job," he said.

In December, during a late night fact-finding tour of the town with a local priest on behalf of the newly formed Partnership Against Racial Harassment in Somerset, a knife was allegedly drawn against the MP only yards from his constituency offices.

At its launch, the campaign group said: "We note with anger that this national evil of racism exists in our community and has been perpetrated by people in our community."

"We do not believe that Yeovil is worse than other towns in this respect. But we know that this is an evil that must be stamped on early and vigorously."

It called on the community to unite against racism and called upon "the people of our community to join us in taking whatever action is necessary to stamp out this evil in our midst."

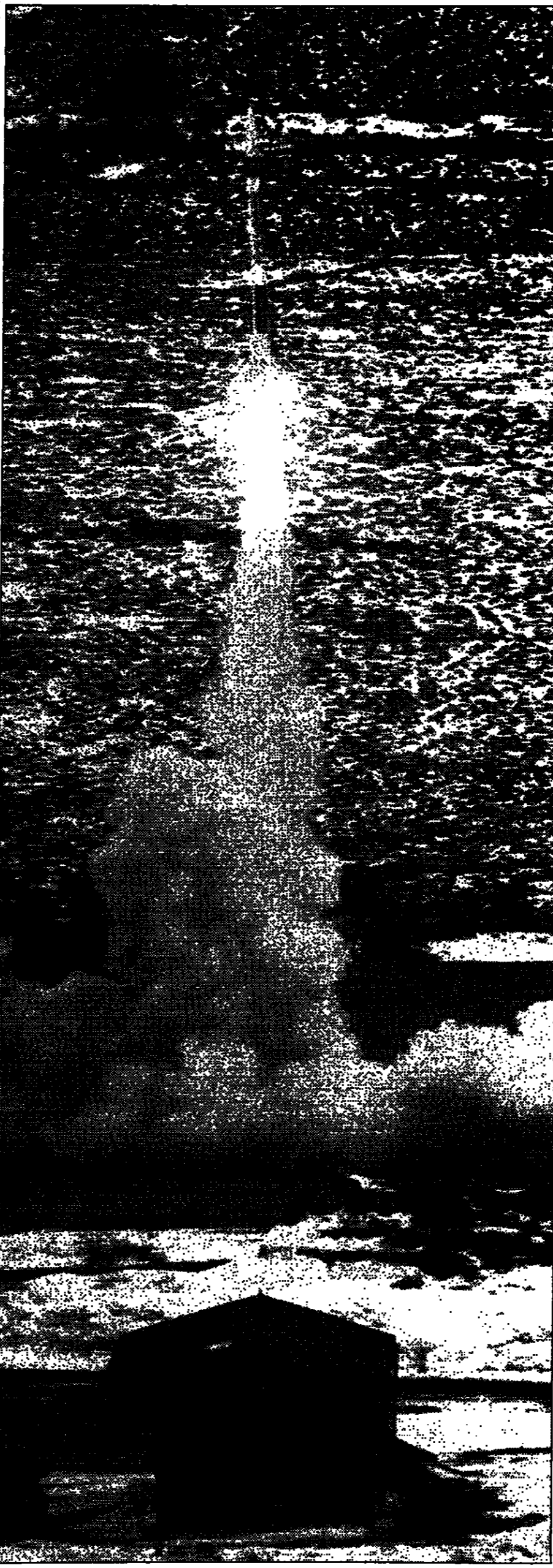
Police said they would be investigating a number of fire-related incidents in Yeovil in recent months. Last October, the town centre offices of the Western Gazette newspaper suffered £100,000 damage in a firebomb attack. A threatening telephone call had been made to the newspaper, which had highlighted racial attacks in the town.

Mr Ashdown and his wife, Jane, were woken by police at about 4am after neighbours called emergency services to the blazing car, which was parked in an open building not far from their thatched cottage. The building was severely damaged.

Two men were seen by officers on a routine patrol a few hours before the attack.

• A man, aged 51, has been charged with affray and possessing an offensive weapon in relation to the incident in December involving Mr Ashdown. He is due to appear in court next week.

Take a pound of sugar, a DIY kit, 17 years of jokes and misfires – and the sky's the limit



John Ezard

BRITAIN'S DIY space-bman Steve Bennett trounced sceptics and vindicated years of lonely struggle when his sugar-powered rocket, Starchaser II, soared 1,890 feet up yesterday over the Northumberland moors.

It did not reach 3,000 feet as he had planned. "My computer projections must have gone astray", he said. But it sent his reputation into orbit and set a record as the largest airworthy home-made rocket built in Europe. Putting a rocket into orbit is Mr Bennett's next project, after years of misfires and jokes.

Gene Kelly, acrobatic king of the post-war song and dance movie, dies aged 83

GENE KELLY, the dancer and choreographer who brought his athletic grace and Irish charm to *Singin' in the Rain*, *On the Town* and other great film musicals of the 1940s and 1950s, died yesterday at the age of 83.

"Gene died peacefully in his sleep this morning, his wife, Patricia, at his bedside," Warren Cowan, his longtime publicist, told EBCS-TV. Kelly had suffered strokes in 1984 and 1985, and Cowan said he never really recovered from them.

He reigned at MGM in the post-war era with serious acting roles as well as musical comedy parts. He also directed *Hello, Dolly!* and other films.

His most memorable dance was the title number of *Singin' in the Rain*, which co-starred Debbie Reynolds. Kelly was co-director as

well as choreographer and actor in the 1952 film, a light-hearted look at the early days of talking pictures. In 1988, it was one of the first 25 films selected by the US Library of Congress for its National Film Registry of significant movies.

Kelly's acrobatic dance style contrasted with the more elegant Fred Astaire, who began his film career a decade earlier. "People would compare us, but we didn't dance alike at all," he said in a 1994 Los Angeles Times interview. "Fred danced in tails – everybody wore them before I came out here – but I took off my coat, rolled up my sleeves and danced in sweat-shirts and jeans and khakis."

They danced together only twice: as two casual friends sporting clichés in *Ziegfeld Follies* (1946); and at the end of their dancing careers in a

light-footed dust for *That's Entertainment Part II*.

Kelly had more unusual dance partners in the 1945 film *Anchors Aweigh*, sharing the screen with cartoon characters such as Tom and Jerry. The film, which also co-starred Frank Sinatra and Kathryn Grayson, won him a 1945 Oscar nomination as best actor.

His most bravura performance came with *An American in Paris*. He created the dances, climaxed by the 17-minute ballet with Leslie Caron to George Gershwin's music. The number cost \$300,000 (2300,000).

The film won the Academy Award as best picture of 1951. He began concentrating on dramatic roles and directing in the late 1950s, particularly after a knee injury sidelined him from dancing for a couple of years. — AP

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The powerhouse new bestseller from

ELIZABETH GEORGE

IN THE PRESENCE OF THE ENEMY

OUT NOW IN BANTAM PRESS HARDCOVER

Blair warns Labour of fall in polls

Patrick Wintour, Chief Political Correspondent

AN EXTENDED shadow cabinet meeting was convened yesterday by Tony Blair to brace himself for a substantial fall in Labour's massive poll lead following the Harriet Harman affair.

Damage from the affair is expected to spread to the revived image of divisions within the party.

The shadow cabinet was shown long-term polling revealing that voter identification with Labour is at an all-time high, but public scepticism with all politicians means trust in Labour, one of the keys to the party's election, could prove fragile.

The Tory counter-attack was given a further boost yesterday when Central Office, in a formal act of reconciliation, issued a speech by John Redwood attacking Labour's idea of a stakeholder economy. It is the first time that Central Office has embarked on a Redwood since he quit the Cabinet to fight John Major for the leadership.

Mr Blair has, to a degree, decided to fight fear with fear by raising the spectre of a fifth Tory term and the threat of Tory extremism, a theme he adopted on Thursday night for the first time. The phrase "You're not safe with the Tories" is to be repeated by all shadow cabinet members.

Labour polling, taken before the Harriet Harman affair, shows the party well ahead on most issues, as well as leadership, social cohesion and being in touch with ordi-

nary people. Job insecurity remains one of the single biggest issues working against the Government.

The deputy leader, John Prescott, told the meeting that after Labour's clear victory in the Hemsworth by-election, invasions could be made into the Tory vote in the next by-election in the Tory-held seat of Staffordshire South East.

Little mention was made yesterday of Arthur Scargill, whose new Socialist Labour Party just managed to save its deposit in Hemsworth, formerly a strong mining area.

It will not be Peter Mandelson, who will be in charge of general election planning.

Mr Blair is also eager to connect with voters cynical about politicians by insisting he offers hope over fear, policy not personalities, and issues rather than issues.

The Deputy Prime Minister, Michael Heseltine, was dismissive of the latest Labour offensive, accusing Mr Blair of "buckling under pressure" following Harriet Harman's decision to send her son to a grammar school.

"Tony Blair has emerged from three weeks of political mudslinging and exposure rattled and in disarray. This is a man creating the conditions for a fifth period of opposition," he said.

Politics, page 8; Labour's hand across the Atlantic, Outlook, page 15

Elite French troops track down 'rogue' Serb snipers

Julian Borger in Sarajevo reports on Nato's robust approach to enforcing peace in Bosnia

NATO's first lethal action by ground troops, in which a Serb sniper was tracked and killed on Thursday night, was a covert operation by French special forces with a point to prove.

French soldiers stationed in Sarajevo felt guilty for having failed to prevent a Serb grenade attack on a tram on January 9 in which a civilian was killed, or to find the perpetrator. So when Nato vehicles came under fire in the Serb suburb of Ilidza on Sunday, their commanders sent an elite team of soldiers to hunt the sniper.

"From our point of view, we failed over the tram incident. We felt we couldn't fall this time," a French officer serving with Nato's peace implementation force (IFOR) said. "We had people who passed some days and nights out there waiting for someone to show himself."

From ballistics reports on I-FOR vehicles hit in Ilidza, the French narrowed down the likely source of gunfire. By Thursday they had focused on an abandoned factory near the main road from Ilidza to Sarajevo.

"At 6.30 in the evening the teams saw unusual activity in the building. Action teams worked towards the building. Further teams probed nearby watching with night-sights," the officer said.

When a figure raised a rifle, one of the action teams opened fire, hitting the sniper in the stomach and arm. He was taken to a French field hospital but later died, becoming the first person shot dead by I-FOR troops since they arrived on December 20. Nato sources said the



Some things don't change. In Sarajevo, Nato forces kill a sniper. In Tuzla (above) a woman frustrated by lack of information on missing relatives hurls a rock

sniper was armed with a high-velocity rifle with a telescopic sight. A second man with a rifle was arrested on the spot and handed over to the Bosnian Serb police after questioning.

French military sources

said a third suspected sniper had escaped, but Nato spokesmen said they were aware of only two gunmen.

Ilidza is due to be transferred to government rule today. About 15,000 Serbs have already left and many

more are expected to go in the coming weeks.

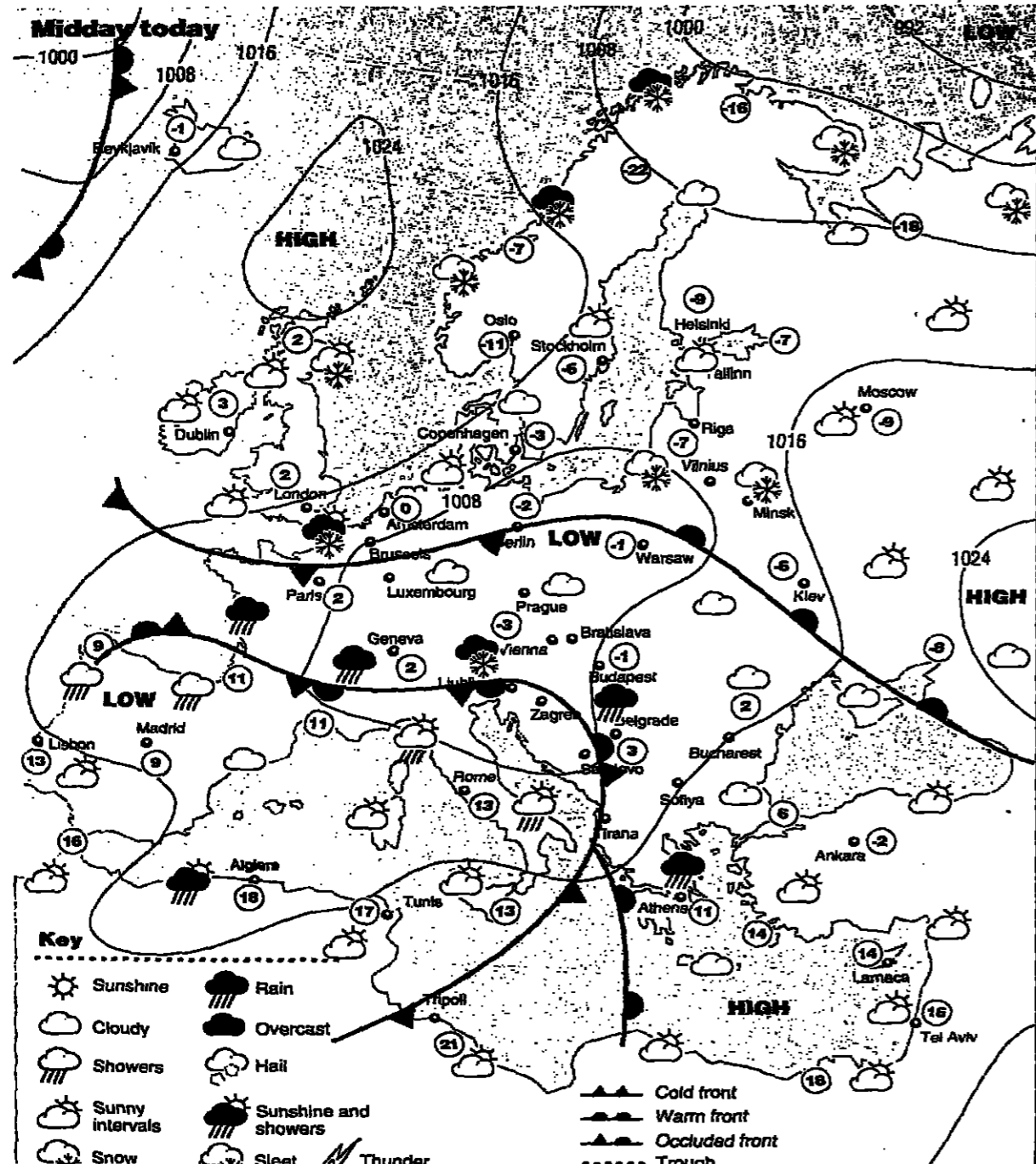
The aggressive response almost certainly took the element by surprise. French anti-sniping teams deployed during the war as part of the UN peacekeeping force could

open fire only if snipers shot first. Command rules were ruled out by the UN's rules of engagement.

Nato's determination to use robust methods to enforce the peace agreement was further illustrated on Wednesday when

Spanish forces called in US A-10 "tank-buster" planes to deal with 30 heavily armed Bosnian government troops who entered the demilitarised zone near Mostar. Once the planes had flown over the unit surrendered its weapons and left.

The weather in Europe



Forecast for the cities

City	Today	Tomorrow	Wednesday
Algeria	12-18	13-19	14-20
Amsterdam	10-15	11-16	12-17
Antwerp	10-15	11-16	12-17
Athens	15-22	16-23	17-24
Berlin	10-15	11-16	12-17
Birmingham	10-15	11-16	12-17
Bombay	24-30	25-31	26-32
Buenos Aires	18-24	19-25	20-26
Calcutta	24-30	25-31	26-32
Cape Town	18-24	19-25	20-26
Cardiff	10-15	11-16	12-17
Chennai	24-30	25-31	26-32
Copenhagen	10-15	11-16	12-17
Dublin	10-15	11-16	12-17
Hong Kong	24-30	25-31	26-32
London	10-15	11-16	12-17
Los Angeles	18-24	19-25	20-26
Madras	24-30	25-31	26-32
Mumbai	24-30	25-31	26-32
New Delhi	24-30	25-31	26-32
Paris	10-15	11-16	12-17
Rangoon	24-30	25-31	26-32
Rome	15-22	16-23	17-24
Sydney	18-24	19-25	20-26
Tokyo	18-24	19-25	20-26
Yokohama	18-24	19-25	20-26

Around the world

City	Today	Tomorrow	Wednesday
Algeria	12-18	13-19	14-20
Amsterdam	10-15	11-16	12-17
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Sydney	18-24	19-25	20-26
Tokyo	18-24	19-25	20-26
Yokohama	18-24	19-25	20-26

European weather outlook

Another very cold day with snow showers near the west and north coast of Norway, but dry elsewhere with some weak wintry sunbursts. Max temp ranging from -5C in Copenhagen to -20C in the northern interior.

Low Countries, Germany, Austria, Switzerland

The Low Countries and Germany should have a moody day with some sunbursts, although a few wintry spells may affect the Dutch coast this afternoon. Switzerland and Austria will be more unsettled with rain and mountain snow. Max temp -2 to +4C.

Central and northern France will be largely dry with some bright spells from time to time, but the south can expect a good deal of cloud and occasional shower outbreaks of rain. Max temp ranging from 2C in the far north to 12C in the south-west.

Spain and Portugal

Spain and northern Portugal will have a mix of sunny spells and scattered showers. The south and east of Spain should be dry and bright with some sunbursts. Max temp 10-17C from north-west to south-east.

An unsettled day in most places with only limited bright spells and plenty of sharp showers. The showers probably heaviest and most frequent in the south and east. Max temp 5-15C from north to south.

Greece

Most of Greece should start fine but showers are likely to spread from the west during the day. The showers perhaps heaviest and longest. Max temp 7-13C.

Television and radio — Saturday

BBC 1
 8.00am News, 8.30am Sports, 9.00am The Muppet Show, 9.30am The Muppet Show, 10.00am The Muppet Show, 10.30am The Muppet Show, 11.00am The Muppet Show, 11.30am The Muppet Show, 12.00pm The Muppet Show, 1.00pm The Muppet Show, 1.30pm The Muppet Show, 2.00pm The Muppet Show, 2.30pm The Muppet Show, 3.00pm The Muppet Show, 3.30pm The Muppet Show, 4.00pm The Muppet Show, 4.30pm The Muppet Show, 5.00pm The Muppet Show, 5.30pm The Muppet Show, 6.00pm The Muppet Show, 6.30pm The Muppet Show, 7.00pm The Muppet Show, 7.30pm The Muppet Show, 8.00pm The Muppet Show, 8.30pm The Muppet Show, 9.00pm The Muppet Show, 9.30pm The Muppet Show, 10.00pm The Muppet Show, 10.30pm The Muppet Show, 11.00pm The Muppet Show, 11.30pm The Muppet Show, 12.00am The Muppet Show.

BBC 2
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BBC Prime
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BBC World
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Bottomley accused of backing Sky

A move to protect big sports events on TV may have been undermined, writes Andrew Culf

VIRGINIA Bottomley, the National Heritage Secretary, was embroiled last night in a clash with a cross-party alliance of peers after the Government appeared to reject curbs on Rupert Murdoch's Sky Sports.

Her decision to publish a consultation document on televising big sports events four days before a Lords vote on the Broadcasting Bill was denounced by a former Conservative minister, Lord Peyton, as a "rather grubby manoeuvre".

The Government is facing defeat in the Lords on Tuesday on an amendment to the bill which would bar subscription channels from gaining exclusive access to eight "listed" sports events, including Wimbledon, the Grand National and the World Cup.

The consultation document, which the BBC claims relies heavily on data supplied by BSkyB, says fresh curbs on satellite TV could mean British sport losing vital funds.

The sponsors of the Lords amendment — the former Labour sports minister Lord Howell, the former Speaker Lord Weatherill, the Liberal Democrat Lord Thomson, and Lord Peyton — said the Government's last-minute consultation was a cynical attempt to scupper it.

Lord Donoghue, Labour national heritage spokesman, denounced it as an outrageous manoeuvre and a trick to stifle debate in the Lords when leading peers of all parties would express support for national access to big events.

Mrs Bottomley said the document was designed to inform the public and Parliamentary debate about balancing interests of sporting bodies and broadcasters over the sale of television rights. But its tone suggested the Government preferred not to bring in curbs, arguing that Sky had increased the amount of sport on television from 3,000 hours a year to more than 12,000. Mrs Bottomley said: "The Govern-

ment recognises the concern that a core of sporting events should be freely available to the nation. But the Government is concerned that ill-thought through changes could deprive sports of a primary source of income."

Amid rumours of a cabinet disagreement, she sided with the desire of sporting bodies to seek the market rate for their events. "The Government believes the weight of responsibility should be with the sports authorities. It is they who should balance the maximisation of audience with maximisation of income. The Government plans meetings with broadcasters, consumer bodies, sports bodies and supporters' groups to canvass opinion.

In a highly unusual move a group of peers have tabled an amendment which could ensure the issue is brought back to the Lords at the end of consultation.

Lord Howell said: "The Government has displayed pure panic. It is trying to cut the Lords out of the process because it fears defeat."

Whitehall sources dismissed as nonsense suggestions that Mrs Bottomley was trying to circumvent the Lords.

A spokesman for BSkyB welcomed the initiative: "Sky Television wants to invest both money and airtime into sport and believes that this investment benefits participants at all levels and will help the continued improvements in sports facilities."

A BBC spokesman said: "The evidence is that people want action. This process gives them the opportunity to put their views and interests to be welcomed. But the corporation expressed surprise the document was heavily reliant on data supplied by BSkyB."

Terry Blake, marketing director of the Test and County Cricket Board, said the listing of events would effectively tie its hands in seeking the most money for the sport. A joint £58 million deal with the BBC and BSkyB has helped fund local cricket.

David Davies, director of public affairs for the Football Federation, said: "Our responsibility is clear. We must always seek to maximise our income in the interests of football at all levels while also recognising we have a responsibility to the wider public."



The Derby, one of the events subscription TV would not be able to buy up

PHOTOGRAPH BY KENNETH SANDERS



Mrs Bottomley: Siding with sporting bodies



Lord Howell: 'Government displaying pure panic'



Lord Donoghue: 'A trick to stifle debate in the Lords'

Sport on TV

'Listed Events'

Cannot be shown on individual pay-per-view basis, but available to subscription channels. An amendment to the Broadcasting Bill would also prevent subscription channels from exclusive access

- Cricket Test Matches involving England
- The Derby
- Grand National
- Football World Cup Finals
- FA Cup Final
- Scottish FA Cup Final
- Finals Weekend at Wimbledon
- Tennis Championships
- The Olympic Games

Sky television

- Boxing: Bouts involving Frank Bruno, Naseem Hamed, Jugni Berni
- Cricket: England overseas Test Matches, England home one-day internationals
- Football: FA Premier League, Football League Cup
- Golf: Ryder Cup
- Rugby League: English Super League (from March 1996)
- Rugby Union: Live coverage of club matches

Terrestrial television

- Athletics: London Marathon (BBC), Golden Four Grand Pro meetings (ITV)
- Cricket: England home Test Matches (BBC), FA Cup (BBC, ITV from 1998), FA Premier League (BBC recorded highlights only), Euro '96 (BBC & ITV)
- Golf: British Open Championship, Grand National, Royal Ascot (BBC), The Derby (Ch 4)
- Horse Racing: Wimbledon (BBC until 1999)
- Lawn Tennis: Formula One motor racing (BBC, ITV from 1997)
- Motorsport: Summer Games (BBC until 2008)
- Olympic Game: Challenge Cup/Royal trophy (BBC until end of 1995/96 season)
- Rugby League: Rugby Five Nations Championships (BBC until 1997)

2,000 jobs go as electricity shops close

Roger Cowe

MORE than 2,000 electricity show-room staff in the Midlands and South of England will lose their jobs with the closure of almost 200 Powerhouse shops announced yesterday.

The company's remaining 120 shops will concentrate on selling electrical goods and will stop providing services for the three electricity companies in their area, further extending the withdrawal from the high street of the privatised electricity companies.

The move by the chain formerly owned by Eastern, Southern and Midlands electricity companies follows the sale of showrooms by London, Yorkshire and East Midlands, and the shrinking of retail chains in other areas.

Only Norwich and Scottish Power have remained committed to retail operations, and they have focused on out-of-town superstores, as have competitors such as Currys and Comet. The Rumblebush chain was closed at the beginning of last year after years of losses.

The Powerhouse closures were condemned by the Labour Party, which linked the announcement to Conservative Party contributions by the parent company, Hanson, whose annual meeting this week approved a £100,000 donation.

"Before the ink has dried on its cheque to the Tories, Hanson was signing the redundancy notices for 2,300 employees," said the shadow employment minister, Ian McCartney. "The Tory party should now give back its latest handout in protest at Hanson's behaviour, or better still donate the money to these employees to help them find another job."



An MEB Powerhouse store in Birmingham

Powerhouse has created other service operations, mainly through post offices. A spokesman said customers would be able to pay bills without charge at 2,700 post offices, while 80 would have freephone links to the company. There would also be 300 extra key-charging points in petrol stations and off-licences for meters.

Shops in the Southern region will lose almost 1,800 jobs, 850 jobs will go in former Eastern shops, while the Midlands regions will lose 700 jobs.

Powerhouse said the closures were essential because of losses resulting from intense competition in electrical retailing. The chain was formed by Eastern and Southern Electricity in 1993 in the hope of reducing the losses of the individual chains. Midlands added its retail operations in the following year.

Hanson gained part of Powerhouse when it bought up Eastern Electricity. It then bought out the shares of Midlands and Southern last spring. But losses have continued, increasing from £5 million to £7 million in 1994-5, with a further £16 million of one-off costs.

Yesterday Glyn Moser, the Powerhouse chief executive appointed last March, said: "This loss-making scenario cannot continue. The plan offers our remaining staff a secure and positive future, protects the profitable core of the business and offers the prospect of a viable future for Powerhouse."

Tycoon pleads with court over inquiry

'Copperfingers' goes to law to protect his group's name

Dan Atkinson and Paul Murphy

THE commodities tycoon Charles "Copperfingers" Vincent took exceptional High Court action yesterday to protect the name of his hugely profitable Winchester group.

Mr Vincent, whose £15 million earnings last year made him possibly Britain's highest-paid company director, applied for judicial review of an inquiry by City regulators into dealings between Winchester and Chilean copper corporation Codelco.

A compromise agreed in court means Mr Vincent will know by Thursday morning whether Winchester is to face disciplinary action from the Securities and Futures Authority, the agency which polices brokers and City deal-

ers, over its Codelco activities. Yesterday, in what the company's QC described as an exceptional case, Winchester asked the High Court to order the SFA to conclude swiftly its inquiry into the company. The inquiry started in April 1994.

The agency had promised on Thursday to make a decision on whether to proceed within 10 days.

The SFA is looking at seven trades executed on Codelco's behalf, totalling 70,000 tonnes of copper, on January 4, 1994. Codelco is suing at least one London metal broker — not Winchester — in connection with losses of more than £132 million suffered in the early 1990s in speculative copper trading.

Separate from the SFA inquiry, Codelco's London solicitors Herbert Smith & Co are looking into trades for the corporation during the period, including Winchester's.

In the High Court yesterday Charles Flint QC, representing Winchester, said his client wanted the SFA to reach a swift decision regarding its investigation of the Codelco matter, the only matter outstanding in its inquiry into the Hampshire group. Winchester has been cleared of the other matters.

Mr Flint said that so far the SFA had "no suggestion of any misconduct on the part of Winchester" and the agency had made this clear. Should evidence of such misconduct come to light, he said, the SFA had pledged to make it available to Winchester for the group's response.

Mr Justice Ognall suggested that, given the SFA had undertaken to reach a decision in 10 days, a full-blown hearing and ruling seemed akin to taking a sledgehammer to crack a nut. But Mr Flint told him that, with the adverse publicity suffered by the company, 10 days was a relatively long time to wait. He added that Mr Vincent, who was in court, operated in "a market in which a company such as Winchester depends on its good name". He stressed that time was of the essence.

"I realise this is an exceptional remedy," said Mr Flint, adding that Winchester "has never sought to prevent SFA from inquiring into any matters". Winchester's file, he said, had been with the SFA's legal department since June and under review by a senior SFA official since January 12.

The judge brokered a deal between Winchester and SFA whereby the latter agreed that, by the close of business next Wednesday, it will have written to Winchester with its decision on the inquiry. Should any misconduct have come to light, the evidence will be presented to Winchester. Otherwise, the inquiry will be closed.

Trail of cyber-sex, lies and floppy disks ends in divorce suit

Ian Katz in New York

JOHAN GOYDAN did not have to hire a private detective to confirm his suspicions that his wife was having an affair. Nor did he need to read her letters or eavesdrop on her telephone calls. He watched the whole thing — on his computer screen.

In a cautionary tale of sex, lies and floppy disks in the new information age, the New Jersey husband has become the first person to sue for divorce on the grounds that his spouse allegedly committed adultery in cyberspace.

His wife, Diane, never met the PC paramour with whom she flirted electronically for months. "We haven't laid a finger on each other," she wrote in one e-mail message. "But I guess it'll be a different story in a couple of weeks."

Mr Goydan, who works for a computer company, became suspicious in October when he returned home early from work to find his wife surreptitiously printing out something from their computer.

He began reading her e-mail messages and found electronic missives from a man calling himself the Weasel, but whose real name is said to be Ray. In one, he boasted he was a master of deception. Messages sent by Mr Goydan's wife were scarcely more reassuring. She told the Weasel she wanted to be with him that night "so we could do this rumble/rumble quietly and in bed in flannel night-shirts (no pants)".

The couple swapped "proxy kisses" and erotic fantasies, and on Christmas Eve The Weasel wrote Mrs Goydan a poem: "Twas the night before Christmas, and all did seem right/The Weasel and Diane were planning their night."

In his divorce suit, Mr Goydan claims his wife and her cyber-lover planned a secret assignation this month, but he concedes that their affair was never consummated. His lawyer, Richard Hurley, said that while the couple had not engaged in "actual intercourse, I'm not sure where technology is taking us these days". Other divorce lawyers doubt that Mrs Goydan's electronic betrayal constitutes evidence of adultery.

The case will send a shiver through the thousands of computer users engaged in what they believed were discreet affairs on the Internet and so-called on-line services that have become the singles bars of the 1990s. Aware of her husband's suspicions, Mrs Goydan warned her lover, who is also married, to "get rid of that paper trail". But she could not erase the electronic trail left by her affair.

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Asked whether the past year has given him more or less respect for the press, Lord Wakeham says: "Probably more, and strangely enough, more respect for the tabloids. The truth of the matter is that the tabloids are in a highly competitive business, fighting on the very margins of what is possible and what is not possible to say."

Megan Tresidder Outlook page 17

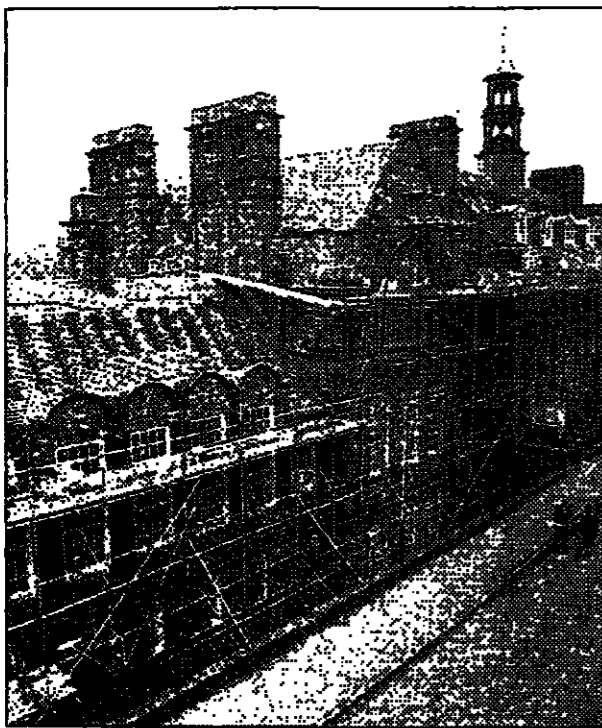


Stephen Joseph Theatre staff in Scarborough moving wardrobe items to their new £5 million home nearby

PHOTOGRAPHS: TONY BARTHOLOMEW



The new theatre, housed in a 1930s town-centre cinema



The old theatre, which reverts to a college after tonight

WHEN the curtain goes down tonight on Alan Ayckbourn's bleak comedy *Just Between Ourselves*, it will mark the end of an unusual artistic union. For Ayckbourn is leaving the tiny Scarborough theatre where he has launched all but three of his 49 plays in the last 20 years.

But he is not going far. Britain's most successful living playwright is moving just 300 yards down the road to plushier quarters — a 1930s art deco former Odeon cinema converted at a cost of £5.1 million.

It is the fulfilment of a five-year dream made possible by a £1.5 million National Lottery grant, a vigorous fundraising drive and two big individual donations (including £400,000 from Ayckbourn).

He has described leaving the Stephen Joseph Theatre in a former grammar school as akin to parting with "a familiar friend". But he also accepts the move is long overdue.

"There will be a real mixture of joy and sadness when we close the doors behind us," said Jeannie Swales, publicity officer for the theatre. "The place has become too small and ramshackled for us, but it holds very happy memories."

The new two-theatre complex will offer state-of-the-art technology, including a magnificent stage lift audiences will be more familiar with in a big city than a seaside town.

"We are moving in to the big league now," insisted Ms Swales. The theatre will, though, maintain its tradition as one of the few repertory companies not operating a star performer system.

Ayckbourn writes at least one play a year, with each performed in Scarborough by jobbing actors before going to the West End or Broadway with big-name casts.

The new Stephen Joseph Theatre will open at the end of April with *By Jeeves*, a rewritten musical collaboration with Andrew Lloyd Webber, first performed in 1975.

One Ayckbourn curtain rises as another falls

Angella Johnson on a £5m scene change

Sentence 'signals loss of faith in psychiatric help'

Ten life terms for knifings in shop

Duncan Campbell
Crime Correspondent

A MAN with a history of mental illness who ran amok and knifed 15 women in a department store at Christmas 1994 was given 10 life sentences at Birmingham Crown Court yesterday.

It was the second time in two days that a mental patient had been sent to prison rather than to a secure hospital. Mental health campaigners said it signalled a complete loss of faith in the ability of the psychiatric services to deal with violent offenders.

David Morgan, aged 31, of Aston, Birmingham, received the sentences after admitting the offences of wounding with intent to cause grievous bodily harm and one of assault. His random attacks took place in Rackhams store in the city centre.

Morgan had attacked the women with a kitchen knife and a butcher's knife as they shopped in the store's cosmetics department. It was only after he had slashed 15 women that he was subdued.

According to relatives, Morgan was profoundly affected by his father's death in 1988 and ceased to talk. He became obsessed with militarism and had a hatred of women.

He was admitted to Birmingham's All Saints Psychiatric Hospital, where he was diagnosed as suffering from schizophrenia, hypomania and depressive psychosis. He was prescribed lithium car-



David Morgan: schizophrenic depressive who hated women

bonate, which seemed to help. He was released with directions that he should receive support from the community psychiatric team. But Adrian Fulford QC, defending, told the court: "It appears from the records that effectively there was no follow-up at all."

In 1992 and 1993 Morgan was conditionally discharged by magistrates after two attacks on women in the street. Two months before the Rackhams attacks he told his GP of his thoughts of attacking women. He was referred to a psychiatrist, who said he could find no signs of mental illness.

Morgan also pleaded guilty to assaulting Steve Messenger, a psychiatric nurse, at Ashworth high security hospital while on remand last December. He had slashed the nurse's throat with a razor blade.

Mr Justice Igor Judge told Morgan: "There can be no doubt that you are an ex-

remely dangerous man. It is certain you must be detained until you cease to represent a risk to public safety. If that time never comes, so be it." He recommended that he should not be considered for parole for at least 12 years.

A defence application for further psychiatric reports to see if Morgan could be detained in a psychiatric hospital was refused by the judge.

Mr Fulford said his client had given warning of his mental state. "He was expressing great concern about thoughts and feelings which he had... This was a very depressed man who was asking for some assistance."

Afterwards Tracey Hitchmough, aged 28, a former Rackhams security officer, who received 21 stitches in a throat wound, said: "I'm glad it's all over. I hate him. He's changed my life completely. My personality has changed, and I can't do things that I used to."

Mental health campaigners saw the sentence as a sign that Britain was following the US in jailing mentally ill offenders rather than treating them in hospital.

Marjorie Wallace of the charity Sane said: "It is a terrible indictment of the psychiatric system." She called for an end to bed closures and for more psychiatric units to be built.

On Thursday Wayne Hutchinson, aged 21, received six life terms at the Old Bailey after killing two people, trying to shoot one person and wounding three others while on home leave from a mental hospital.

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Head avoids discipline

Shepherd refuses to bar teacher who 'covered up child abuse'

Gary Young

THE Education Secretary, Gillian Shephard, has refused to bar a former headteacher implicated in covering up the abuse of disabled children at a special school near Leeds, it emerged yesterday.

Mentally and physically disabled children were sworn at, denied food and slapped by a member of staff over 10 years at the school, run by Scope, formerly the Spastics Society, an internal investigation revealed.

The charity admitted that the headteacher had lied to parents, governors and the social services, when he denied that the abuse had taken place. He had also flouted both the law and child protection procedures when he

failed to report allegations of abuse to the social services. He was suspended in 1994 pending an investigation and resigned from the school before its conclusions were known. He has not been disciplined.

In May last year a parent whose child attended the Hawthorth Hall School at Guiseley, West Yorkshire, which has been granted approved status by the Department for Education and Employment, asked the department to comment on whether the headteacher would be permitted to work with children with special needs again.

"Do you think it is suitable or moral for such a person to seek a position of responsibility in special education?" asked Kevin O'Toole, a former parent governor whose

14-year-old daughter Sian left the school in 1994.

In August the department replied: "Having received the full report from Scope the Secretary of State has concluded that no further action would be appropriate on part so far as any individual is concerned." It was conceded that Mrs Shephard had the power to "consider barring action" under the terms of the Education (Teachers) Regulation 1993.

Mr O'Toole said: "If deliberately lying about the abuse of disabled children doesn't warrant someone being barred from doing this kind of job then you have to wonder what it would take."

A spokeswoman for the department said last night: "We have considered all the information and do not consider that any action is necessary."

Parents of 14 disabled children abused at the school are taking private legal action after the Crown Prosecution Service dropped the case last month.

Planners try new tricks to thwart old bill stickers

Gary Young

BILL stickers is an elusive criminal. For years he has ignored well publicised threats of his imminent brush with the law. But now Swansea city council is getting tough. Tired of warning fly-posters that "Bill Stickers will be prosecuted", it has approved a novel method to prevent those organising nightclubs and political meetings

from touting their wares on the city walls.

The council's planning committee has decided to arm street cleaners, litter wardens, and planning officers with "cancelled" stickers which they can paste on to offending posters.

Hit squads will also be sent around the city on Sundays to rip down all the posters they find. "While this initially involves a significant effort, it soon becomes effective as the

number of posters decreases due to the knowledge that they will only be in place for a very limited period," said planning director David Wilson.

"Where successful prosecutions have been made, the fine is, in my opinion, inadequate to act as a deterrent," he added, citing the case of a flyposter last year who was given a conditional discharge and made to pay £10 costs to the council.

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سكانة الاجل

Arthur Scargill and his party were far from being the toast of the breakfast after the night before, reports David Ward Hemsworth's New Labour MP tastes sweet victory

THE new Labour (or New Labour) MP for Hemsworth yesterday grasped a bottle of HP sauce and shook a large metaphorical dollop of the brown stuff all over Arthur Scargill. Jon Trickett, still relishing his 72 per cent share of the vote, had turned up for a victory breakfast with his wife Sarah and party workers at the council offices (a former convent) in South Kirkby, West Yorkshire.

As a forkful of scrambled egg hurtled into his mouth, his boot went into the founder of the Socialist Labour Party, whose candidate Branda Nixon polled just under 2,000 votes.

"Everywhere you went in the campaign, it was Scargill," he recalled. "I don't think we heard Mrs Nixon speak until yesterday. This was Arthur Scargill's show and he ought to have stood. But he lacked the moral courage to stand and be associated with that kind of defeat. I think it was a disgraceful performance on his part."

Ms Nixon said the rules of the National Union of Mineworkers prevented Mr Scargill from standing for Parliament. She also rubbed Mr Trickett's nose in his grilled tomato by reminding him that Labour had pre-

J Trickett (Lab) 15,817 (71.9%)
N Nixon (C) 1,942 (8.8%)
D Ridgway (L/D) 1,516 (6.9%)
B Nixon (S Lab) 1,193 (5.4%)
Majority 13,875

Other candidates: Peggy Alexander (Green) 157; Michael Cooper (Independent) 111; Peter Davies (UK Independence) 45; Diane Loughton (Natural Law) 28; Lord Sush (Official Monster Raving Looney) 16; Mark Thomas (Mark Thomas Friday Night Channel 4) 12.

Swing 5.4% Con to Lab
Turnout 39.5%

General election 1992: David Wright (Lab) 29,342; Garnet Harrison (Con) 7,867; Valerie Megson (Lib Dem) 4,459; Labour majority 22,075; Turnout 75.9%.



The SLP's Brenda Nixon: "What I said was unreported"

dicted she would come last and lose her deposit. "I don't think Mr Scargill was my mouthpiece at all," she said. "But because of who he is, he bound to attract a lot of attention. When I did speak, what I said often went unreported."

Mr Trickett reached for another slice of toast and went on the marauding offensive. "Almost everyone I met had been or was related to someone who had been a member of the NUM. Mr Scargill touched the lives of many of those people. He was going round on the stump introducing himself as the union's president. But none of that applied to traditional loyalties

believe in Arthur's policies — I'd sooner support the Greens, who believe in what they say. He's just feathering his own nest."

But some, including Colin Mears, a traditional Labour voter with a shopping bag, were prepared to be generous. "Arthur's making his way through life. He was unlucky with the miners' strike and lost because the Notts miners worked. Let the man do what he wants. It's up to him and I think he's all right. If it was tight and I fancied his policies more than the Labour man, he'd get my vote."

His friend Sammy Davies, invalidated out of the pits when he was 53, was equally kind. Of course the SLP was right to field a candidate. "The more there are, the better the selection," he said.

Back in the former convent, as catering staff fed the media gloriously greasy Old Labour bacon sandwiches, Mr Trickett recalled a warm gesture from an opponent. A fringe candidate had abandoned his own interest and urged voters to support Labour. He followed Mr Trickett with a small red carpet, easing it before his feet at photo opportunities, below at Mr Trickett: "You are a god!"

He lost his deposit.



Sauce of satisfaction... Jon Trickett and his wife, Sarah, celebrate his 72 per cent vote share. PHOTOGRAPH DON ALPHEE

Local heat over Harman cools

Alex Bellis

AGRASSROOTS revolt against Harriet Harman fizzled out yesterday after attempts to call for her resignation failed at branch meetings of her constituency Labour Party.

Activists in Peckham, angered by the shadow health secretary's decision to send her son to a selective grammar school outside the area, appear to have buried the hatchet. They will support her at the constituency's next general committee meeting on February 15.

John Friary, a Labour councillor who had wanted Ms Harman to resign from the shadow cabinet, said: "She made things difficult for the party, but then there is absolutely no question of us being disatisfied with her work as an MP. I think everyone supports her now."

The closest rebels got to giving their MP problems at Thursday's nine annual branch meetings, where councillors seek re-election to the general committee, was in St Giles ward, where a proposal for an emergency motion calling for her resignation was defeated by 21 to 6.

Similar proposals failed to materialise at the other

branches, but the meeting of Brunswick branch, which has perhaps the most vocal anti-Harman members, was not quorate.

Clare Cozens, chairman of the local Labour Party, said she had had no telephone calls from any of its 760 members on the issue. "There is no groundswell of opinion. There are not people separately turning up to meetings to have a go at Harriet."

A straw poll of Labour voters on Peckham High Street indicated that the furore, which gave Tony Blair his worst week since he became leader, was unlikely to hit the party at the ballot box.

Gillian Chinweokwu, a housewife aged 46, said: "I think she should have sent her son locally. I agree with the posters against her that say 'Do as I say, not as I do'. But I would not stop voting for her. She does do a lot of good. She listens to what people have to say."

Joe Hunt, aged 77, said: "It's not been a big deal locally. If I could afford to send my kids to a better school I would. She's doing a good job."

Ros Ester, aged 33, unemployed, said: "She is quite within her rights. It is not Labour's fault that schools are selective. She is making the best of a bad mess."

Blair seeks ways to boost links with party membership

Patrick Wintour, Chief Political Correspondent

TONY Blair has ordered a review of how a better relationship can be forged between a future Labour government and its 360,000 strong membership, including the party national executive.

Mr Blair, and his party general secretary Tom Sawyer, want a new party structure and culture which could avert a repeat of the disastrous break-down in relations between party and government in the Winter of Discontent in 1978-79.

They are keen to try new ways of involving the party's membership and believe the national executive's primary role should be as a sympathetic conduit between membership and government.

Mr Sawyer said: "The general perception last time was that a Labour government had failed the party. On one hand, Tony Benn led the NEC and, on the other, Jim Callaghan led the government and parliamentary party. Next time we want to have a working partnership between the party and the government. That involves better communication between the two, but it also needs a public recognition from the NEC that its

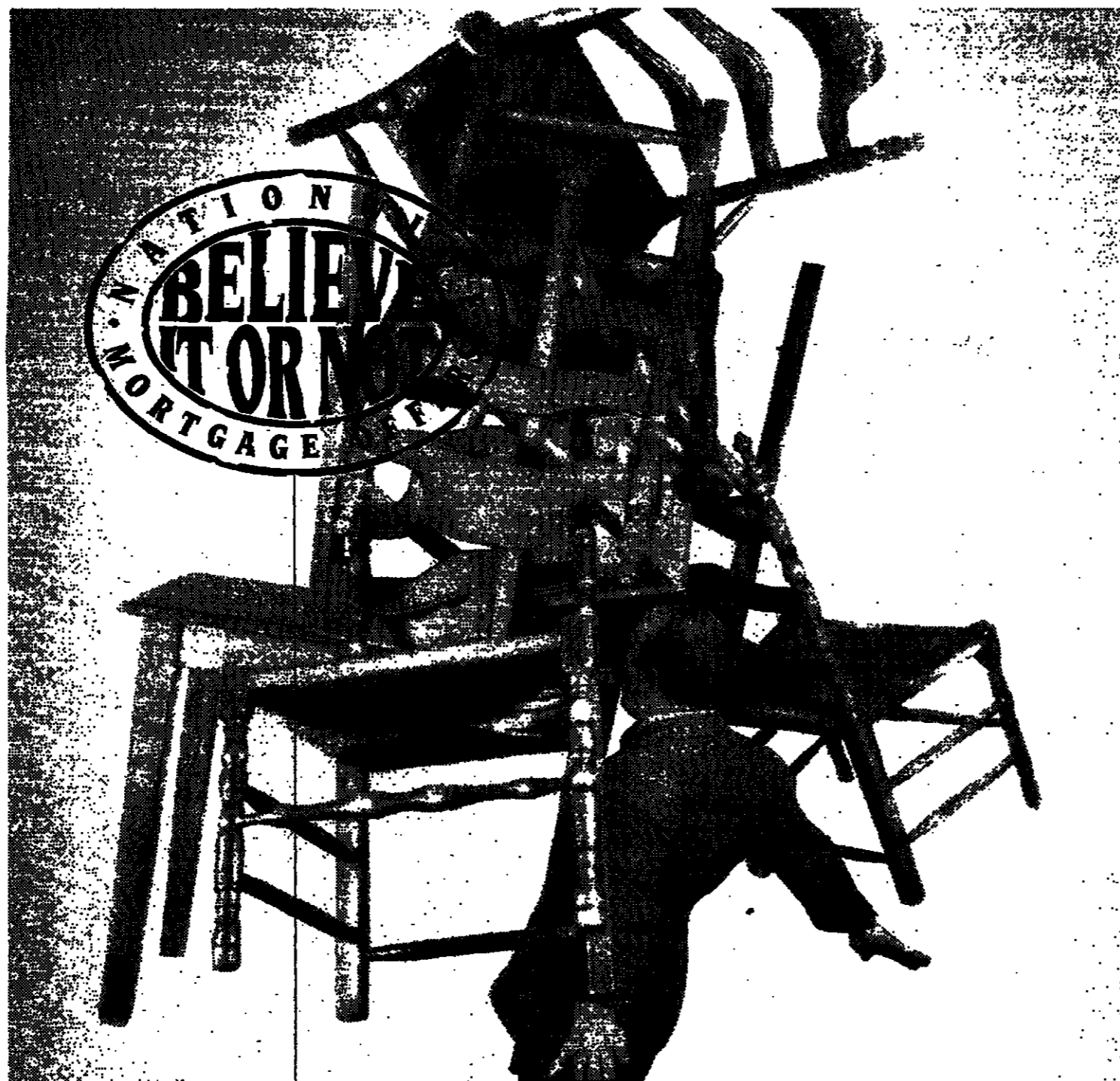
role is to support the leadership, and communicate with the party, and not just to be on guard for betrayals by the leadership. The party must not be left on the sidelines, as Tony says 'Bye, bye, I am PM now!'"

The project, entitled The Party in Power, is being overseen by the NEC itself with the help of management consultants. Mr Sawyer hopes brainstorming sessions by NEC members working in four task groups will produce big reforms in four areas — to the NEC's method of working, its relations with a Labour government, the party's democracy and party activism on the ground.

Dennis Skinner, the only NEC member to reject the inquiry, has already voiced left wing suspicions that the project is designed to eliminate potential points of resistance within the party to a Blair-led government.

He has speculated Mr Blair wants to introduce biennial party conferences and turn the NEC into a cheerleader in the party for the leadership.

He said: "We don't need management consultants to tell us that the relations between the party and a Labour government will not be good. It follows like night follows day."

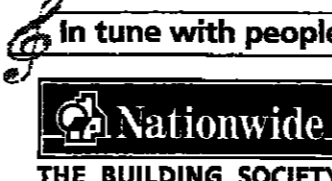


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Defiant Serbs try to hold on to Croatian territory

Zagreb threatens to seize Eastern Slavonia if its leaders attempt to scuttle the peace deal, writes Chris Hedges in Vukovar

THE 130,000 Serbs in Eastern Slavonia are trying to undermine a provision in the Dayton peace agreement which calls for them to relinquish this last slice of Serbian-held territory in Croatia.

Serb authorities in the contested region have refused to acknowledge publicly that it will be reintegrated into Croatia.

Since last week they have been broadcasting television and radio announcements urging the 30,000 Serbian refugees who were driven out of other parts of Croatia — and are now in Serbia — to settle in the territory.

A Serb majority would hinder the resettlement of Croats, Muslims and others who fled and who are entitled to return under the Dayton deal.

Before the war, there were 68,000 Serbs and 135,000 ethnic Croats, Hungarians, Muslims and other ethnic groups in Eastern Slavonia. But only a few hundred non-Serbs, most elderly and infirm, remain.

Rebel Serbs captured a third of Croatia in 1991 but last year Croatian troops, in a series of attacks, retook most of the Serbian-held territory, driving more than 200,000 Serbs into Serbia. Eastern

Slavonia and Serbian-held Bosnia.

Serb leaders in Eastern Slavonia continue to issue defiant and vitriolic statements against Croatia, a sign that the hostility which led to war in 1991 after Croatia declared independence will continue to threaten prospects for enduring peace.

In recent days Croatian officials have warned that, if the Serbs in Eastern Slavonia try to scuttle the peace agreement, Croatia's army will seize the region by force. Croatia's foreign minister, Mate Granic, warned that any obstruction or delay in carrying out the deal "would be tantamount to the prospect of a renewed conflict".

Eastern Slavonia, a region of about 100 square miles bordering Serbia, with fertile plains and oil, is due to be handed back to Croatia by the Serbs within a year — although this deadline can be extended by another year.

But what is set down on paper has yet to be accepted by most people in the region, about 80,000 of whom were driven from their homes in other parts of Croatia.

The United States ambassador to Croatia, Peter Galbraith, who met local residents on Tuesday, was greeted with jeers when he



talked of "the inevitable return of Croatian authority".

During the transition period, the United Nations will administer the region, backed by 5,000 troops.

Eastern Slavonia saw some of the war's most savage fighting when Belgrade ordered its army to attack shortly after Croatia declared independence in June 1991.

Vukovar, defended for three months by Croatian troops, suffered more damage from tank fire and heavy shelling than any other city in the former Yugoslavia. Large sections of the city were reduced to rubble.

Serbs there — like the Croats who were driven out — have suffered, and most are in no mood for reconciliation.

"My five children and I were driven out of our home in Croatia at the beginning of the war," said Jorka Dusanovic, aged 42. "We now live in a house that once belonged to a Croat. How is it that he will be allowed to come back and throw me and my children out on the street, but no one will force the Croats to let me go back to my home?"

Factories lie abandoned, and farmland is covered with land mines. Most of the buildings are gutted.

Groups of angry, dispirited young men, many demobilised from the army, mill about the muddy streets with little to do. About 600 police officers from Belgrade keep order.

Several hundred more have been sent to the enclave to prevent an exodus into Serbia.

The Serbs in Eastern Slavonia insist that there will be ways to roll back the Dayton agreement.

"Croatia must allow the Serbs expelled from the Krajina [region in southern Croatia] and other areas to return to their homes," said Slavko Dokmanovic, Vukovar's mayor. "This is part of this peace agreement. If they do not, and the Croatian authorities are still allowed to come in here, we will have been cheated by the international community." — New York Times.



Action men... Strikers leave the Yesaulskaya pit near Novokuznetsk after carrying out essential maintenance

France faces new round of industrial stoppages

Alex Duval Smith in Paris

AS France faces a new round of industrial action, the government yesterday attempted to ease the back to employers by lambasting them for not creating jobs.

Unions have backed the Communist-led CGT in calling for a week of action starting on Monday to protest at changes to the welfare system and to press for a shorter working week.

In the built-up to the demonstrations and limited stoppages, the prime minister, Alain Juppé, alienated the employers' confederation by accusing businesses of pocketing job-creation grants without shortening dole queues.

Inspired by an outburst last week by President Jacques Chirac, Mr Juppé said: "We will not further reduce employers' social charges unless we feel we are getting something for something, such as a massive pledge to employ young people."

The chairman of the employers' confederation, Jean Gandois, retorted: "I have had enough of hearing about presents to the industry when many are fighting for survival."

Mr Juppé's war of words with employers has intensified since the publication on Wednesday of record unemployment figures: 11.7 per cent, or just above 3 million, in Marseille. 23 per cent of under-25s are unemployed.

Economists blame the increase in joblessness — up by 37,000 in November and December — on bankruptcies caused by last year's strikes.

Unions privately concede that they do not expect to inspire the same degree of mobilisation as they did in the face of Mr Juppé's plan last November to cut spending on health and social security.

But a CGT spokesman said: "The French are unpredictable. We should reserve judgment until after the first demonstration, by public sector workers, in Paris on Tuesday."

On Thursday, workers from all unions at the Fiat Industries defence group will stop work for two hours. The government is considering moves which could cost up to 50,000 defence jobs.

The week of action will end on February 11 with a demonstration in Paris. Metro and bus workers in the capital, who are considering a pay offer, say they may strike at the end of the week.

Meanwhile, two months of negotiations over working conditions at Air Inter, the state-owned domestic airline, have just collapsed.

Hard-core drug explosion kicks Athens into action

The fastest growing rate of addiction in Europe has forced the government to change its policy, writes Helena Smith

BEFORE Billio came to 40 Eressou Street she had given up hope in life. For two years she had waited for the clinic in the grimy Athens back street to open. By the time it did, last week, she had lost her "good vein" and was sniffing the heroin that had brought her to its door.

Now she hopes to be one of thousands of hard-core Greek drug users who can kick the habit with the help of methadone, the heroin substitute which has just been officially introduced to the country.

"I'm 36 and never thought I'd reach the age of 50," the British-born former secretary said, rubbing her glazed eyes. "I'd tried every possible cure and had my 'off' periods but always turned to 'gear' again. I was a prisoner and now I'm starting to feel free."

Its location at the crossroads of Europe and Asia and its long coastline have long made Greece a significant entrepot for drugs, but it was not seen as a country free from drug use. In the last few years, however, it has developed Europe's fastest growing rate of hard-core addiction.

It has 100,000 heroin addicts in a population of 10 million, compared to the 50,000 currently registered in the Netherlands, whose population is half as big again. Heroin deaths have risen from five in 1980 to 87 in 1990 and 180 last year. The increase has caused widespread dismay, not least among the poor, where drug abuse is said to have assumed epidemic proportions.

After years of ignoring it, the authorities have finally begun to tackle the problem. Last year the Socialist government allocated the biggest part of its welfare budget to creating the Organisation Against Narcotics (Okana), to administer an annual 2 billion drachma drug prevention programme.

Last week, almost 20 years after Britain adopted the substitute, it began methadone programmes in Athens and Salonika.

The two centres complement an array of closed and controversial "therapeutic communities" where addicts are forced to take the harsh "drug-free" treatment.

"Drug addiction is our biggest social problem and it's getting worse every year," said Christos Kokkoris, a neurologist and psychiatrist who heads the Athens programme.

"Being a very conservative society, we were very slow in developing ways of dealing with it. People thought it was far too radical for the state to employ the ultimate measure of substitution treatment."

Since he began the pilot programme, Dr Kokkoris's telephone has not stopped ringing. His 200 places were oversubscribed almost the day it was announced.

"Fifteen years ago I was accused of being crazy when I advocated the use of methadone," he said. "Now parents who are desperate to get their children in here call all the time."

The alarming rise in teenage addiction — a recent sur-

vey showed that one in three pupils had experimented with drugs — has spurred the government into adopting a national narcotics awareness campaign.

In the autumn teachers and municipal workers began three-month training courses so that they can counsel children in school hours.

"It's absolutely essential that we do this now if we are to crack this problem in the next decade," said Stephanos Manikas, who chairs Okana. "As Greece has become more developed, drugs have got trendy: suddenly we've got kids regularly taking 'week-end' ecstasy pills in nightclubs across the country."

But many believe that real headway can be made only if the government relaxes its stringent anti-drug laws, which prohibit doctors treating addicts.

They have been blamed for the overcrowded jails, 60 per cent of whose inmates, foreign and Greek, are serving drug-related sentences. Many are arrested on the islands, where local addicts and traffickers traditionally flock during the summer months.

In recent years several British tourists caught in possession of soft drugs have been given heavy prison terms.

"The laws are so repressive that they make no distinction between soft and hard drugs, or addicts, drug dealers and non-addict users," said Dr Kleantzis Grivas, a psychiatrist who heads the Athens programme.

"It's high time that addicts began to be treated as patients and not criminals. Only then will we see that it works."

Minister warns of catastrophe as Russian coal strike continues

THE Russian government met mining industry leaders yesterday on the second day of a national coal strike in protest at delayed wages to try to limit the economic and political damage.

Miners in Ukraine and Romania also struck to demand measures to soften the impact on the industry of market reforms.

The Russian coalmining monopoly Rosugol said six more pits had joined the strike since it began on Thursday, bringing the total to 124. Interfax news agency said. Thirteen open-pit mines had resumed work, leaving 14 still out, it said. Union leaders said 80 per cent of the industry, which employs 750,000 workers, was on strike.

The first deputy prime minister, Vladimir Kadanov, a former car factory boss handed a troublesome role within days of his appointment, met management and union leaders to try to dispel tensions.

Vitaly Bodko, leader of the miners union Rosugolprofsoyuz, said Mr Kadanov had promised mea-

sures to solve the problem at the beginning of next week. But Vladimir Katanov, a miners union member, told fellow MPs that meeting was unsuccessful and the strike would go on.

The fuel and energy minister, Yuri Shafarik, told MPs: "Even a one-hour stoppage of all the coal and electric sectors would inevitably lead to a catastrophe."

Tajik army halts 'coup attempt' by rebel troops

Rebels in Dushanbe

TAJIK government troops yesterday pushed back a mutinous army force that had advanced towards the capital, Dushanbe, to press demands for the dismissal of the government of the central Asian former Soviet republic.

Eyewitnesses said the rebel Colonel Mahmud Khudoberdiyev had retreated to a mountain pass after advancing to within 10 miles of city and being confronted by pro-government soldiers and tanks.

"There was no fighting as the rebels, who remain loyal to the Tajik president, Imomali Rakhmonov, were reluctant to fight the presidential guards and irregulars, the witnesses said.

The rebels are now camped about 20 miles from Dushanbe, but they have not dropped demands for the sacking of a government they condemn as incompetent and corrupt.

President Rakhmonov, who was supported by Col Khudoberdiyev during the civil war in 1992, told parliament that the rebels' action amounted to an attempted military coup.

But he said he would meet them for talks if they gave up their weapons and surrendered. He also suggested he was ready to sack some ministers to avert violence.

"Everything must be done to avoid bloodshed," Mr Rakhmonov was quoted as saying by Interfax news agency.

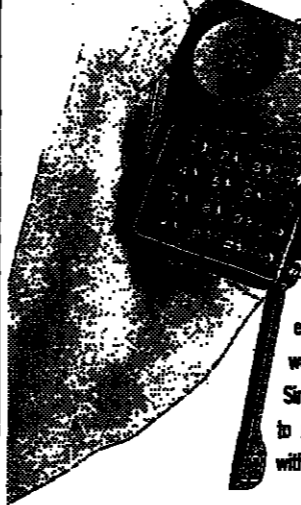
In Washington, the state department warned United States citizens not to travel to Tajikistan because of the crisis. US citizens inside the country were told to stay at home.

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Britain gets EU warning

John Palmer in Brussels

CHANCELLOR Helmut Kohl issued a veiled warning to the British government yesterday that it should not try to deflect other European Union countries from moving ahead to monetary union and closer political union.

His remarks will be seen as a direct rebuke to senior British figures, including the former Foreign Secretary, Douglas Hurd, who have asked Germany to propose postponing the planned move to a single currency in 1999.

In an address at Louvain University near Brussels, the German chancellor served notice that the pace of European integration would not be set by those who wanted to slow progress to closer union.

Mr Kohl said the single currency project was going through "a period of uncertainty" but he insisted that "the policy of European integration actually comes down to a question of peace or war for the 21st century". He stressed that "it is no use following the ostrich policy". The chancellor did not men-

tion the British government by name but it was clear whom he had in mind. "During the next few years we will have to prove that a viable Europe can be built with 15 and more states," he said. "The slowest ship in the convoy should not be allowed to determine its speed. If individual partners are not prepared or able to participate in certain steps towards integration, the others should not be denied the opportunity to move forward."

Mr Kohl was referring not only to British moves to slow monetary union, but more generally to British opposition to measures to strengthen political decision-making in the EU. These issues will be at the heart of next month's inter-governmental conference in Turin to review the Maastricht treaty.

Mr Kohl underlined Germany's commitment to a radical enlargement of the EU to eastern Europe: "I would regard it as a disaster if Europe's strength were to diminish with its enlargement. However, I would find it disastrous if Europe were only able to ensure its strength by keeping others out."

He denounced the "current fashion to evade pessimism" about monetary union and European integration: "Have Europeans become tired of Europe again? I do not believe this is really the case. He said the path to closer union set out in the Maastricht treaty calls for a considerable effort on everybody's part.

Senior German government officials say there is no question of Mr Kohl or President Chirac raising the issue of postponing the 1999 deadline for monetary union in Turin. British government sources said last week that the entire monetary union project would face a "credibility crisis" within months.

In his address Mr Kohl said that if the Maastricht review conference were to fail, "it will take considerably longer than one generation before we are given such an opportunity again". In spite of the Government's declared opposition, he reiterated his support for more majority vote decisions — even in areas of foreign policy and security — as well as a greater role for the European Parliament.

Economic notebook, page 23

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Limping giant beats a slow retreat

Unloved and underfunded – the once fearsome military machine of the Soviet era has collapsed, forcing nationalists to fire the only salvos they have left against the West: threats. **David Hearst** in Moscow reports on their emergent doctrine

A NEW concept of national security is emerging in senior Russian military, political and intelligence circles which would make any enlargement of Nato to the three Baltic states a cause for war.

One senior defence analyst – the author of a draft national security doctrine that could well be put into practice under a new president – said: "Accepting the Baltics into Nato would be as provocative to us as the deployment of nuclear missiles on Cuba was to Washington. Accepting Poland and Hungary into Nato means a cold peace, while an enlargement to include the Baltics is war."

The doctrine being elaborated by the independent and highly influential Institute of Defence Studies in Moscow determines the territory of the former Soviet Union as the zone of "basic Russian national interests". The army's main task would not only be the defence of national territory and the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation, but the defence of the rights of 25 million Russians in the "near abroad".

Russia's potential adversaries are defined as the United States and Nato. Their main allies are defined as Ukraine, China and Iran.

Anton Surikov is a research fellow at the institute and is an aide to Yuri Maslakov, the former politburo member and a key figure in Russia's military-industrial complex who has re-emerged as chairman of the economic committee in the Duma (parliament).

Mr Surikov said: "The more radical points of this document must be seen as responsive measures if the position of the West develops into the worst scenario for Russia. The Baltic states can play a very good role as a bridge between Russia and the West. But it cannot be a zone where Nato infrastructures are to be deployed.

"If Nato began its evolution towards a political structure, that would be another thing – but today what we have is the real possibility of Nato military infrastructures moving towards our borders and this is what provokes concern. All the talk of Russian aggressiveness is a bluff. The West really understands that Russia is technically in no position to invade."

The growing weakness of Russian conventional forces, graphically illustrated by their inability after 14 months to crush just 6,000 separatist fighters in Chechnya, is making the military planners of a nationalist Russia even more reliant upon the country's nuclear deterrent.

Without the satellite states in Central and Eastern Europe – Russian generals see themselves in a position analogous to Western Europe at the height of Soviet military power. Outgunned by the overwhelming might of Nato's conventional forces, Russia would have to rely on nuclear weapons as its main deterrent.

The concept of national security elaborated by the institute, extreme though it appears, is not radically at

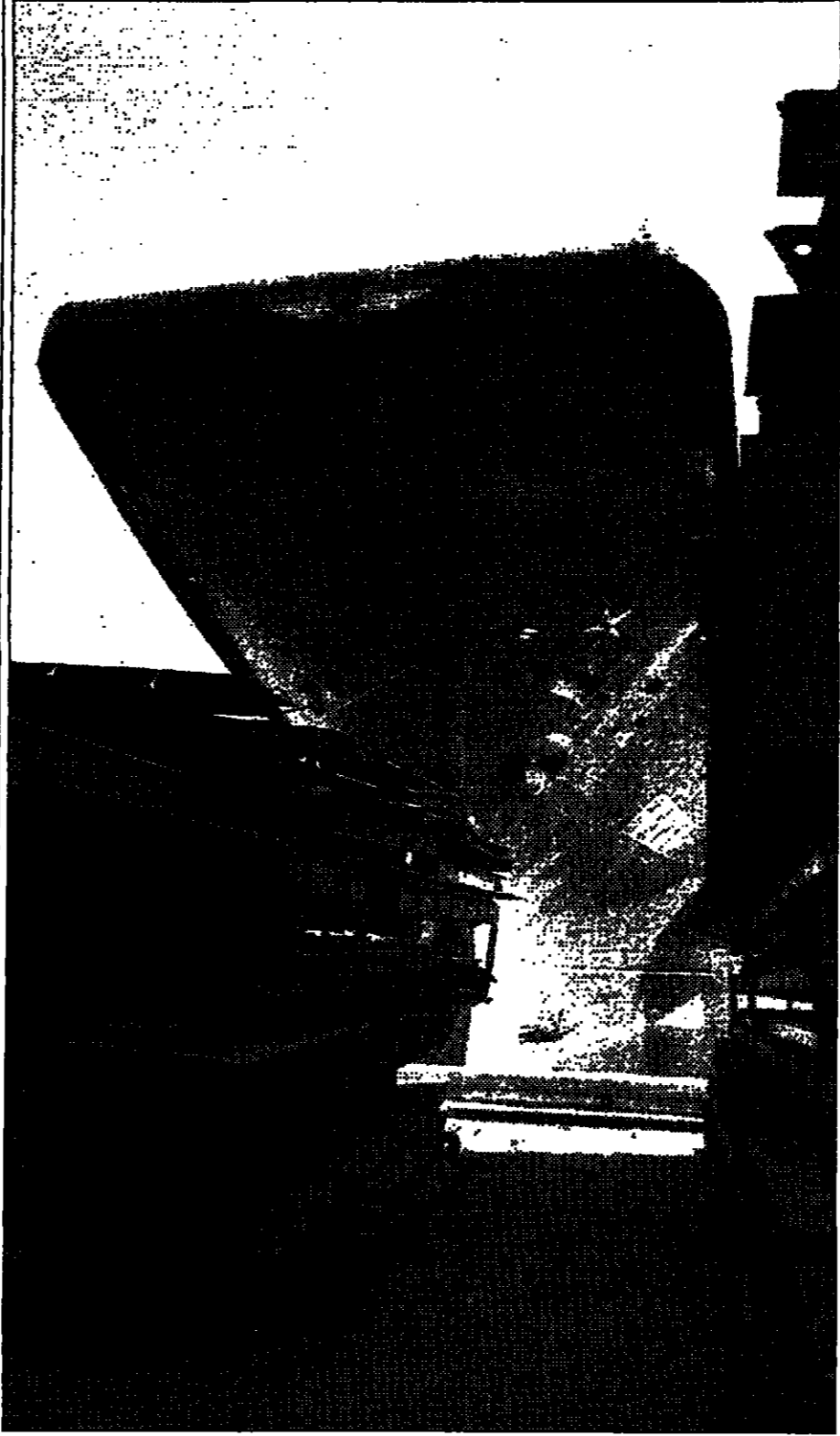
odds with what the army top brass themselves think.

Vladimir Slipchenko, the vice-president of the Academy of Military Science, is a retired Major-General and an authority on Russian military doctrine and its reform.

Professor Slipchenko said: "On the territory of potential Nato members, a potential military theatre is being prepared with a network of airports, communications and command systems. We are looking with concern at how Hungarian airports are being used by Nato for the operation in Bosnia."

Since the end of the Soviet Union, the Russian army has seen itself as on the retreat. Its size has gone from more than 4 million men to 1.5 million. Its best equipped and trained units once stationed in Germany, Poland and the Baltics have been withdrawn and, with no place to house them, disbanded.

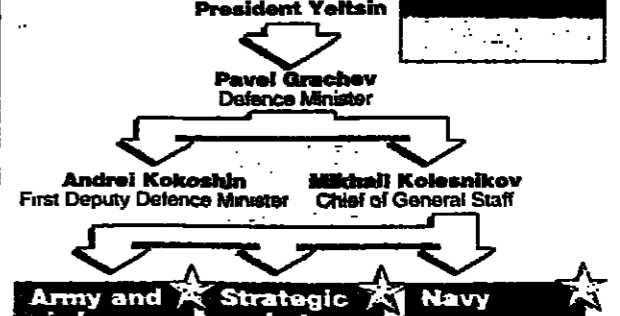
Many of the second-rate units that were already stationed in Russia remained untouched. They have now become undermanned, underfunded and in no condition to go into service. Many units have 20 per cent fewer officers than they need to operate



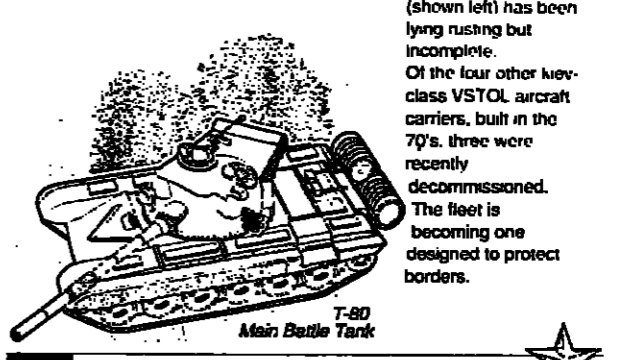
Mothballed... Russia's Varig aircraft carrier stands rusting at the Nikolayev shipyard in the Ukraine, the symbol of a former power in vertiginous decline. PHOTOGRAPH BY KREMLIN

The armed forces

Who's in charge?



Army and air force	Strategic rockets	Navy
Army personnel: supposed to be 1.7 million, probably 1.5 million because of understaffing.	No figure on how many missiles are active. Estimated 700-800. Single and multiple war headed missiles.	Soviet Union had biggest general purpose submarine force in the world with some 300 vessels. Many of its nuclear-powered submarines are not now operational and there are thought to be just 13 modern nuclear-powered submarines with ballistic missiles. There is no reliable estimate of working surface ships. Not one has been laid since 1991. Only one of three modern aircraft carriers is in service, the other was scrapped, and the third, the Varig (shown left) has been lying rusting but incomplete.
Tanks: 19,500	Strategic aircraft Tu-95 bear, heavy bomber, and the super-sonic Tu-160, the Blackjack - about 150 - half of which are still in Ukraine and Kazakhstan, Russia expecting to get them back this year. (not used for three years)	Of the four new class VSYOL aircraft carriers, built in the 70's, three were recently decommissioned. The fleet is becoming one designed to protect borders.
Combat infantry vehicles: 19,000		
Armoured personnel carriers: 16,000		
Artillery units: 21,300		
Combat aircraft: 2,150		
Air defence aircraft: 1,200		



Other forces

Ministry of the Interior
Interior Minister: General Anatoli Kulikov. Police number about one million, of whose troops - possibly 300,000 plus.

Border Guards
Head of the Border Guards: General Andrei Nikolayev

Federal Security Service
Head of the FSB: Gen Mikhail Barsukov

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'Accepting Poland and Hungary to Nato means a cold peace - while an enlargement to include the Baltics is war.'

at battle strength. At the rank of "praporshik", the Russian equivalent of sergeant, the degree of undermanning rises to 30 per cent and, in the ranks, some units are operating at 50 per cent below battle strength.

The problem with having thousands of units operating under strength creates bizarre sights. Senior officers are often seen doing soldiers' jobs at the controls of a tank, or even operating the lift to the control bunker of an air defence unit in Moscow.

One of the Russian soldiers killed trying to stop the Chechen commando escaping from the Dagestani border village of Pervomayskaya was an officer of the rank of colonel. He was leading a unit of only 20 or so men - doing a lieutenant's job.

Reformers do not have a problem with numbers. They argue the ideal size of a modern, professional Russian army should be about 1 million. There are, in fact, currently about 8 million men under arms, apart from the armed forces, under General Pavel Grachev, rival services compete for resources.

As a result of the refusal by most army units to storm the former parliament in October

China to make Flanker fighter

CHINA is to pay Russia more than \$1.3 billion for a licence and the equipment needed to produce the modern Su-27 fighter, the head of the Russian air force, Pyotr Deynekin, said yesterday, writes James West in Moscow.

The Su-27 - known to Nato by the codename "Flanker" - was first deployed in 1984 and is now one of the mainstays of Russian air defences. But it also has the ability to escort bombers over ranges of more than 900 miles.

The announcement reported by the Interfax news agency comes at a time of increased tension between China and Taiwan. Beijing is already buying 50 Su-27s off the shelf from Russia, and Taiwan has responded by ordering French and American fighters.

Anatomy of a battlefield disaster

JAMES MEEK in Moscow examines the symbolic shambles of the Dagestani siege

OF ALL those who took part in one of the worst disasters in Russian military history, the cow can be said with the most certainty to have been innocent.

Shortly before the first Russian attack on the Dagestani village of Pervomayskaya - where Chechen separatists holding hostages had dug in - the desperate commander of a platoon of paratroopers ordered to hold a large and vitally important stretch of open country blocking the rebels' escape route begged an infantry unit to lend him an armoured car. They did.

When the assault began at 9am, the gunner tried to test its cannon on the first moving target he saw - a cow. After firing three clips he realised the cannon had not been ranged properly. Before he could decide what to do about it, the Chechens blew the vehicle up with an anti-tank rocket.

Trying and failing to kill ruminants with borrowed guns - it was an inauspicious start for an operation where all the odds should have been in Russia's favour but where 300 well-led, motivated guerrillas showed they were not

trained at all - to fight Nato in a future conflict. There were artillerymen, trained to shell grid positions on maps. There were helicopter gunship crews, trained to shoot up villages in Chechnya and Afghanistan.

In charge of them all was General Mikhail Barsukov, a former KGB officer and now in charge of its successor, the federal security service - a man who had built his career organising bodyguards for VIPs.

Throughout the build up to the assault, and the subsequent operation - which ended only when the Chechen leader, Salman Raduyev, his fighters and a large number of their captives slipped through the sloppy cordon and escaped - many of the Russian troops were cold, hungry and isolated.

One interior ministry soldier said all he had eaten in four days was a loaf of bread and four tins of sprats.

Of the 50 members of the Moscow SOBR unit, four were killed in the fighting, 13 were injured and 20 were hospitalised with frostbite and pneumonia.

Only senior unit commanders had maps of Pervomayskaya, and these were not really maps at all but photocopies of what the village had been supposed to

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Racing

Win to get it right again

Ken Oliver

DURING the last six years three class flat performers, Kris-bensis, Royal Gait and Alderbrook, have been transformed into champion hurdlers and there is a confident mood at Richard Har-non's Marlborough stable that Right Win will join this elite band.

A smart middle-distance runner on the level, Right Win made an impressive hur-dling debut at Sandown last month and he returns to the Escher track this afternoon to boost his big race claims in the AGFA Hurdle.

Hannon will not be braving the cold, he is summing him-self in Barbados, but the horse has been under the as-tute care of ex-jockey Steve Knight who says: "He is in tremendous form. All being well, the next stop will be the Kingwell Hurdle at Wincan-ton on February 22 and then Cheltenham."

The smart money was down for the Champion Hurdle for the Right Win made an after he thrashed Strong Promise by five lengths the 33's was reduced to 10-1.

With the classy Atours in opposition, today's race is the acid test for Right Win (3.00), but there was much to like about that first perfor-mance and I expect him to confirm Knight's confidence.

The Tote Bookmakers Handicap Hurdle has been Roberty Lea's long term ob-jective and Mary Reveley's eight-year-old is preferred to Tringlot, who won this race three years ago, and the fast

improving Pharanour, who has won his last three races in tremendous style.

Roberty Lea (4.10) is a tough customer who is well suited to Sandown's uphill finish, winning here last ses-sion when heading King Lucifer by eight lengths over today's trip.

The uphill climb will also be tailor-made for Paddy's Return (1.20) in the opening Ripley Four Year Old Novice Hurdle.

After winning his first two races at Sedgefield and Ascot in November, Paddy's Return did not enjoy the best of runs when chasing home Sovereign Parade at Haydock. He is earmarked for the Triumph Hurdle and a victory would book his Cheltenham ticket.

David Nicholson could take two of the three chases on the level with Martin's Lamp and Percy Smollett.

Martin's Lamp (1.50) ran a cracking race in the Victor Chandler at Ascot last month. He appeared to have the spoils sewn up when turning for home with a clear lead but was overtaken on the run in and beaten one and a half lengths by Big Matt, who was receiving 11lb.

Percy Smollett (3.35) thrashed Unguided Missile by eight lengths at Ascot last month and can follow up by making good use of the 18lb he receives from Young Hus-ler in the AGFA Diamond Handicap.

The clash between Gold Cup winners Jodani and Master Oaks in tomorrow's Hennessy at Leopardstown will not materialise for trainer Peter Beaumont reports that Jodani is coughing.



Festival time... Noel Chance with Mr Mulligan, his favourite for next month's Sun Alliance Chase at Cheltenham

Tales of Oz, the Pope and Guinness testing

Chris Hawkins meets Noel Chance, the trainer who lives up to his name

THE name Noel T. Chance has a Run-onesque ring about it and no doubt this Irishman, who loves a bet and is in his first season training in this country, would have appealed to the great American writer and horse-player.

Chance has a colourful turn of phrase himself and knows the racing game up-side down, having learned a lot about horses and gam-bling in Australia.

Aged 44, he has yet to make the big time and first impressions of his small yard in Upper Lambourn suggest he has some way to go.

But a steeplechaser called Mr Mulligan, unbeaten in four races this season and favourite for the Sun Alliance Chase at Cheltenham, as they were closing train-als on January 1 — from then on you'd need a visa — I scraped up £200 and paid for myself.

"When I got there on New Year's Eve I had £6 in all the world. I got a job quickly enough but with a man, Vic Thompson, who made Hitler look like a chortboy. "He had me up at 4a.m. every day and was never satisfied. I stuck it two weeks and moved on to Neville Begg at Randwick. He was a great fella and I became his travelling head-lad. "I had a few touches and after five years had saved

\$5,000. So, missing Ireland badly, I decided to come home. After a year as head-lad to Clem Magner, I now had enough to start up my-self, only for the Pope to mess things up.

"It was training at Phoenix Park, but then the Pope came over and they regis-tered the gallopes for a mass religious meeting and you couldn't use them after — left them full of holes, they did, so I went to the Curragh."

Chance did not have a lot of winners — a regular dozen or so a season — but had them all well backed.

One season he had six first-time-out bumper win-ners and his reputation for shrewdness grew; hence the approach last spring from Worcester, whom he had never met in his life.

Summer jumping in Eng-land he sees as ripe for ex-ploitation, but the prize money on the Flat will be a temptation he cannot ignore.

"I'll probably have half a dozen on the Flat, but I much prefer jumping and the people in it," he said.

"They're real sportsmen, I mean, you can't meet anyone more obnox-ious than those little Flat jockeys, could you?"

Whether you agree with this assessment or not Chance is on solid ground when it comes to horses and Guinness. "I know a good pint and I'm the tester for my local at East Garston — if I don't like it they don't sell it. And when I tell you this Mr Mulligan is a good horse I'm not joking either."

Sandown card with form guide

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Time. Races include 1.20 Paddy's Return, 1.50 Martin's Lamp, 2.25 Jibber The Kibber, 3.00 Right Win (nob), 3.35 Percy Smollett, 4.40 ROBERTY LEA (nap), 4.40 Value.

Table for Channel 4 races. Includes 3.00 AGFA HURDLE 2m 110yds £10,000 and 3.35 AGFA DIAMOND HANDBAP CHASE 2m 110yds £16,000. Lists horses, jockeys, and trainers.

Table for Channel 5 races. Includes 1.50 GULDFORD FLAMES HANDBAP CHASE 2m £4,750 and 2.25 SCALLY ISLES NOVICE CHASE 2m £11,000. Lists horses, jockeys, and trainers.

Table for Channel 6 races. Includes 3.45 FEBRUARY HANDBAP CHASE 2m £4,750 and 4.40 FEBRUARY HANDBAP CHASE 2m £4,750. Lists horses, jockeys, and trainers.

Table for Channel 7 races. Includes 1.15 HELLER APPOINTMENT HANDBAP CHASE 2m £4,750 and 1.45 HELLER APPOINTMENT HANDBAP CHASE 2m £4,750. Lists horses, jockeys, and trainers.

Wetherby runners and riders

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Time. Races include 1.10 Date Star, 1.40 Top Cuck, 2.10 Blythport Gruff, 2.40 Down The Fall, 3.15 Gannon's Tycoon, 4.30 Tipping Tin, 4.30 Mr McWhorter.

Table for Channel 4 races. Includes 1.40 SPORTRIFF HANDBAP HURDLE 2m 110yds £24,000 and 2.10 SPORTRIFF HANDBAP CHASE 2m 4f 110yds £4,000. Lists horses, jockeys, and trainers.

Table for Channel 5 races. Includes 1.45 HELLER APPOINTMENT HANDBAP CHASE 2m £4,750 and 2.10 SPORTRIFF HANDBAP CHASE 2m 4f 110yds £4,000. Lists horses, jockeys, and trainers.

Table for Channel 6 races. Includes 1.45 HELLER APPOINTMENT HANDBAP CHASE 2m £4,750 and 2.10 SPORTRIFF HANDBAP CHASE 2m 4f 110yds £4,000. Lists horses, jockeys, and trainers.

Table for Channel 7 races. Includes 1.45 HELLER APPOINTMENT HANDBAP CHASE 2m £4,750 and 2.10 SPORTRIFF HANDBAP CHASE 2m 4f 110yds £4,000. Lists horses, jockeys, and trainers.

Lingfield (All-weather Flat)

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Time. Races include 1.15 Blue's Yard, 1.45 Racing Telegraph, 2.00 Invernet Magna, 2.40 Learning Curve, 3.00 Golden Parade, 4.25 Magsack, 4.25 Magsack.

Table for Channel 4 races. Includes 1.45 HELLER APPOINTMENT HANDBAP CHASE 2m £4,750 and 2.10 SPORTRIFF HANDBAP CHASE 2m 4f 110yds £4,000. Lists horses, jockeys, and trainers.

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Leopardstown tomorrow

Table with 2 columns: Race Name and Time. Races include 3.45 FEBRUARY HANDBAP CHASE 2m £4,750 and 4.40 FEBRUARY HANDBAP CHASE 2m £4,750. Lists horses, jockeys, and trainers.

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Advertisement for RACELINE, featuring phone numbers 0891 108 168 and 0891 108 168, and listing Sandown, Wetherby, Lingfield, and Navan.

Large vertical advertisement on the right side of the page, featuring the text 'Barker with L...' and 'We GET EXC...'. It includes a partial image of a horse's head.

Soccer

African Nations' Cup final: South Africa v Tunisia

Barker sparkles with Lucas' aid

John Perlman meets three local heroes with something to prove to the English

LUCAS RADEBE had just come home from a typical day at Elland Road... Are you going to make it, South Africa's national coach Clive Barker asked of the player he has long regarded as the key man in his defence.

a detailed career in the Premiership back on the tracks. Radebe suffered a knee injury against Coventry last March, just as he was making a claim to a regular first-team place.

often used to talk about meeting in the final. Masinga says - it is doubtful that Tunisia figured. Yet the North Africans, humiliated when they hosted the previous tournament two years ago, stole quietly into the semi-finals, where they shocked Zambia 4-2.



Semi-ecstatic... Barker congratulates Radebe ADL BRADLOW



On the rise... Masinga challenges the Egyptian goalkeeper PHOTOGRAPH: GARY M PROIR

Birmingham escape over crowd trouble

Martin Thorpe and Don Best

BIRMINGHAM CITY have escaped serious punishment for the crowd trouble at last November's home game with Millwall. A Football Association disciplinary hearing at St Andrews yesterday ordered City to play one game behind closed doors, suspended until the end of this year.

they have been completely exonerated, which is what I wanted to see rather than savage sentences. Birmingham are currently waiting to hear if they face punishment over a stormy Anglo-Italian Cup tie in Avonmouth, while Charlton have written to West Midlands Police, with a copy to the FA, complaining about an incident after the club's recent game at St Andrews in which visiting fans were attacked and £2,000 worth of damage caused to three supporters' coaches.

FARTHER AFIELD: Nine contenders if a manager from outside England is acceptable

Foreign fantasy for the FA

David Lacey believes that, when it comes to coaching, the world owes us something

AS the Football Association's committee of head-hunters began to draw up a shortlist of likely candidates for the England job, Graham Kelly, the chief executive, admitted that the man who will succeed Terry Venables after the European Championship did not have to be English.

and Roy Hodgson revived Irish and Swiss fortunes. George Raynor took Sweden to the 1988 World Cup final. And Mike Smith, who has been suspended from the next two African Nations' Cup competitions. The Confederation of African Football also fined the Nigerian FA £10,000 and required it to compensate the CAF for damage to the tournament.

George Graham

Country: Scotland IN MANY ways the best-qualified of all the non-English types to succeed Terry Venables, not least because his devotion to Venables' methods would ensure the continuity the FA is seeking. Graham is also well up in foreign football and, as he showed with Arsenal, can organise teams to beat classy opposition.



A British, as opposed to a foreign, coach would be less likely to arouse the xenophobic tendencies of the tabloid press. But whoever takes over after Venables should be made fully aware of the sort of headlines which would greet failure. For turning round a team, anyone coming from Europe would find it difficult to cope with the demands of a domestic programme which stifles international opportunity. A touch of frost and Venables has had to abandon the second of the get-togethers he had planned for the England squad.



Johan Cruyff

Country: Holland ANOTHER admirer of things English, Cruyff's name has been linked with the odd league club from time to time, most notably when Robert Maxwell was touting him for Derby County. If the FA's coaching revolution manages to produce a technically superior crop of young internationals, why not Dutch?



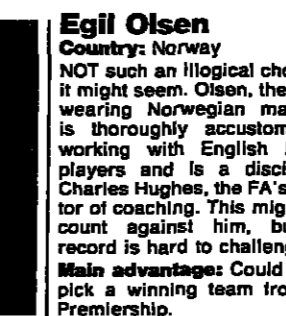
Gerard Houllier

Country: France HOULLIER's name has already been mentioned in connection with the post of technical director, which has been his principal raison d'être in France. He would combine foreign subtleties with English pragmatism but would need better material to work with than that at present available to Venables.



Kenny Dalglish

Country: Scotland ONE of the best footballers ever produced in Britain and highly respected as a coach, it would be interesting to see Dalglish in charge of the national squad. He might surprise quite a lot of people, even if his sense of media relations did contribute to make Alf Ramsey look like Princess Di.



Egil Olsen

Country: Norway NOT such a logical choice as it might seem, Olsen, the wealthy wearing Norwegian manager, is thoroughly accustomed to working with English league players and is a disciple of Chris Hughes, the FA's director of coaching. This might now count against him, but his record is hard to challenge.



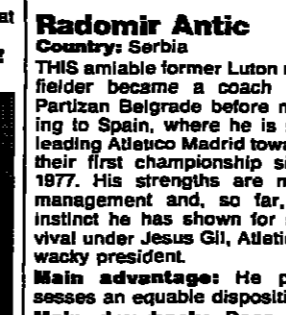
Ossi Ardiles

Country: Argentina ONE of the best foreign imports to appear in the English league, Ardiles's ability to produce teams, which play exciting attacking football has never been doubted. His teams usually end up leading goals to drowning point but with Ossi in charge life with England would be far from dull.



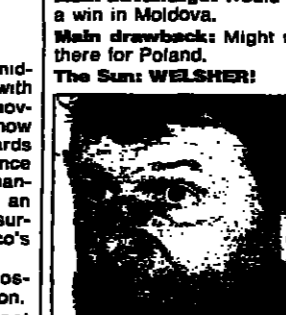
Franz Beckenbauer

Country: Germany BECKENBAUER has had a strong affinity with England since the 1966 World Cup and was always an admirer of the Bobbies Moore and Charlton. He might have less patience with English playing standards as they are at present but at least the squad might come properly to terms with the sweeper system.



Radomir Antic

Country: Serbia THIS amiable former Luton midfielder became a coach with Partizan Belgrade before moving to Spain, where he is now leading Atletico Madrid towards their first championship since 1977. His strengths are management and, so far, an instinct he has shown for survival under Jesus Gil, Atletico's wacky president.



John Toshack

Country: Wales TOSHACK's custodianship of the Wales squad was spectacularly brief but his years in Spain must have lent him a valuable insight into the ways of foreign teams. Add to that his Liverpool tutelage under Bill Shankly and Bob Paisley and he becomes a better England candidate than first impressions might suggest.

TEAM SHEET

- Arsenal v Coventry The Gunners have Adams out injured while Klose and McGarvey are suspended. Bastin is back but the Star Blues will be without the injured Williams. Aston Villa v Leeds Villa's Wright could miss out, so Staunton stands by Pemberton could return for Leeds and there may be a place for Gray. Blackburn v Bolton Hartford is likely to stick with the side but defender Westwood is suspended. Wednesday's Progress is back but Breckie is ruled out. Waite is called up. Liverpool v Tottenham Redknapp returns to the squad but Roddick is suspended, so Wright or Hartwood will play. Sutton may make his debut. Manchester City v QPR City make checks on Quinn and Carlo while QPR's Burrows is injured, so Liddell stands by. Gallon may play and Wilkins has added his own name to the squad. Newcastle v Sheffield Wed Ferdinand, Howe, and Lee all return but Dennis and Pascoch are suspended. Wednesday's Progress is back but Breckie is ruled out. Waite is called up. Southampton v Everton Charlton faces a late test on an ankle while Watson looks set to play. Everton's Jackson may return for Underhill but Ebbrell starts a two-match ban so the reserve defender Allen waves. West Ham v Nottm Forest Dani is likely to start on the bench. Bracken is still injured but Lazaridis, in it. Forest's Pugh and Stenzel are expected to keep their places. Wimbledon v Man United Hartford, Earle and Ekoku are all suspended for Wimbledon, who welcome Gary Jones after a four-match ban. Partick is poised to return to United. TOMORROW Chelsea v Middlesex Chris Duberry joins Wise and Hughes on Chelsea's suspended list. Johnson and Sinclair are in. However, Bono's Jamiro Quincey and Wylie are injured.

We win on goal difference. GET EXCLUSIVE LIVE COVERAGE ON BBC RADIO 5 OF EVERY PREMIERSHIP MATCH. 909 & 693 MW

Soccer

Cereal killer is stalking Keegan

Soccer Diary

Martin Thorpe

THE crunch has finally come for Kevin Keegan. And it has nothing to do with the on-off signing of Asprilla...

moral values because he has now ditched her. Er, wait a minute. If Campbell is so virtuous...

THERE was huge excitement at the Soccer Diary desk this week. We received our first E-Mail letter...

THAT'S Scunthorpe United's season down the drain then. Yesterday's selection of their boss Dave Moore...

IT'S true, says Paul Marsden of Salford, that when Manchester City were thrown out of their Hampshire hotel...

POOR old Kevin Campbell. Just as he gets his game together at Nottingham Forest...

Red alert for Cantona return

ERIC CANTONA returns to Selhurst Park for the first time today since the Frenchman launched himself at fans...

the ground with Wimbledon, do not play until tomorrow and there are fears that some fans will attempt to infiltrate the crowd...

Scottish preview

Burns thankful for revival of Celtic's main McStay

Patrick Glenn

PAUL McSTAY'S re-emergence this season as the most influential player at Parkhead brought some breathless tributes from his manager Tommy Burns...

"His confidence is so high that he knows before he goes out that he's going to be the best player on the field. McStay's frustration before did not just include the lack of trophies...

A N Other

INJURY curtailed this tough little midfielder's journey to a land which promised, if not glory, then a few more years of biting tackles...

Last week: David Burnside (West Bromwich Albion), Southampton, Crystal Palace, Wolves, Plymouth Argyle, Bristol City, Colchester United.



Back with a smile... Gunnell recalled days when 'I was doing five-minute runs and then crying my eyes out'

Athletics

Rage and the return of Gunnell

Stephen Bierley follows the hard road from injury to the start line today

MANY people tried to tell Sally Gunnell that the injury which struck her down in the first month of last year was a blessing in disguise...

There were times when my husband Jon needed a tin hat, she said yesterday, able to laugh about it at last. "But people said it was perhaps the motivation I needed for this summer's Games."

Those nerves were already starting to jangle yesterday when she entered the Holiday Inn under the glare of television lights...

This is a different sort of nerves, though - more apprehension, really. "I'm not expecting too much of myself. These indoor races are about getting round in one piece. It's all about getting the competitive feel back."

It was after a training session in Exeter in January last year that Gunnell developed a sore heel. She was absolutely bursting with fitness and looking forward immensely to defending her world 400m hurdles title in Gothenburg...

It was after a training session in Exeter in January last year that Gunnell developed a sore heel. She was absolutely bursting with fitness and looking forward immensely to defending her world 400m hurdles title in Gothenburg...

horrible running them. I was kidding myself. On the day in August that the American Kim Batten took both her world title and her world record Gunnell decided to commit herself to the surgeon's knife.

The problem was a spur of bone in her right heel which was digging into the Achilles tendon but it was not until the Swiss surgeon opened her up that the problem became starkly obvious.

Gunnell had assumed that after the operation her troubles would be over. Far from it, the pain was intense. "In those early days I was doing just five-minute runs and then crying my eyes out. I had thought the problem would be taken away almost immediately but instead the pain was twenty times worse."

She had been at the end of her tether just before the operation and now the stress and tension piled up again. She swam and swam, with her husband cajoling and pushing every day but it still hurts for a couple of hours after I've trained.

Because of this Gunnell was still a little anxious yesterday but the late news that Linford Christie had decided to run in Birmingham will have diverted some of her anxiety.

Her presence on the track amid last season's internal wrangling might have helped switch the focus back from politics to pure athletics. A huge number of fans will be watching for her to emerge from this winter fit to defend her Olympic title in Atlanta.

Gunnell has just returned from nearly four weeks' training in South Africa where her times have been steadily improving. "The old feeling of just floating over the ground is coming back. Today she runs on the flat at the National Indoor Arena, hoping that all future hurdles are confined to tracks leading on to Atlanta.

Rugby League

Lowes bails out to Bulls

Paul Fitzpatrick

IN leaving Leeds for Bradford Bulls, James Lowes has sacrificed his chance of appearing in his third successive Silk Cup Challenge Cup final...

But missing out on Wembley was, in his eagerness to join the Bulls, a price Lowes was prepared to pay. Hugh McCann, the Leeds manager, and the club coach Dean Bell used all their powers of persuasion this week in an attempt to keep Lowes, but in vain. Bell said: "James figured heavily in our plans."

Mick Shaw, one of the game's rising young hookers, could, with Lowes out of the way, make the position his own at Headingley. He does not yet have Lowes's all-round qualities but has the advantage of pace over him...

Tennis

Olympian Seles beaten

John Duncan

MONICA SELES set her sights on an Olympic Games debut yesterday despite suffering her second defeat since her comeback...

It was after a training session in Exeter in January last year that Gunnell developed a sore heel. She was absolutely bursting with fitness and looking forward immensely to defending her world 400m hurdles title in Gothenburg...

It was after a training session in Exeter in January last year that Gunnell developed a sore heel. She was absolutely bursting with fitness and looking forward immensely to defending her world 400m hurdles title in Gothenburg...

Weekend fixtures

ENGLISH LEAGUE First Division Barnsley v Walsley, Huddersfield v Tranmere, Ipswich v West Bromwich Albion...

BELL'S SCOTTISH PREMIER

Celtic v Hibernian, Falkirk v Kilmarnock, Hearts v Raith, Motherwell v Aberdeen, Partick v Rangers...

SCOTTISH LEAGUE

First Division Dundee United v St Johnstone, Dunfermline v Dundee, Greenock Morton v Hamilton, St Mirren v Dumbarton...

Rugby Union

FIVE NATIONS CHAMPIONSHIP: England v Wales, France v Ireland, Scotland v Italy, South Africa v New Zealand...

HOCKEY

NATIONAL LEAGUE: First Division Barnsley v Walsley, Huddersfield v Tranmere, Ipswich v West Bromwich Albion...

WOMEN'S CLUBS

WOMEN'S CLUBS: Barnsley v Bolton, Bradford v Burnley, Burnley v Colchester, Colchester v Doncaster...

Performance of the week: Jason McAteer (Liverpool), a big influence in his team's win at Aston Villa on Wednesday.

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Advertisement for 'Duel's' featuring a large image of a person and text including 'The World's Best Defence', 'heat', 'Twickenham', and 'Leeds'.

RUGBY UNION: THE FIVE NATIONS CHAMPIONSHIP

England v Wales at Twickenham

Duels in line for divided England

Robert Armstrong

THE painful rift between Will Carling and the England manager Jack Rowell was exacerbated yesterday as reports trickled out of the England camp at Richmond suggesting that the captain wanted to distance himself from team selection and the tactics for today's Five Nations match against Wales.

Rowell took no active part in the England squad's training session at Roehampton, which lasted less than an hour. Neither did the coaches Les Cusworth and Mike Slemmen but it would be premature to draw hard and fast conclusions from Rowell's lack of public communication with Carling, only because the England captain often takes charge of the final Friday session along with the pack leader Ben Clarke.

It is thought that Carling wishes to deflect further adverse criticism away from himself during the championship because he feels he exercises limited influence on the overall strategy. Speculation on the limits of Carling's authority hardly fosters the mood of optimism England need for a clash with Wales.

Significantly both Carling and Rowell gave a surly response this week to a positive invitation from the Welsh Wales coach Kevin Bowring to let their hair down and

other day to "a refreshing-looking Welsh team" one had the uneasy suspicion that the England manager was already planning to stifle Welsh enterprise with the short-range firepower of his forwards instead of seeking to scatter Wales with pace and imagination. But it would be a major disappointment were his loose forwards to resort to the embarrassing back-row moves that played so wittily into French hands.

Having forfeited the chance of a Grand Slam, Carling's collection of talented individuals — they are not yet a team — have little to lose by throwing off the shackles and getting the ball into the cultured hands of their midfield trio as quickly as possible. Besides, Dallaglio, Clarke and the recalled Rodner have far too much all-round footballing ability to dissipate their efforts on a dull grid up and down the touchlines.

To their credit Wales have taken a bold risk by picking the new half-back partnership of Arwel Thomas and Robert Howley for their visit to Twickenham, where the 75,000 capacity almost makes the Arms Park seem homely.



Rowell... self-exonerated

The Welsh locks, Jones and Llewellyn, should be able to win their own line-out ball and perhaps even pinch one or two of England's deliveries, should Regan fail to improve on his throw-in.

Twickenham teams

- ENGLAND: M Catt (Bath), J Sleightholme (Bath), W Carling (Harlequins, capt), R Underwood (Leicester), P Grayson (Northampton), M Dawson (Northampton), G Rowntree (Leicester), M Regan (Bristol), J Lousard (Harlequins), M Johnson (Leicester), M Johnson (Northampton), T Rodner (Northampton), L Dallaglio (Wasps), B Clarke (Bath).
WALES: J Thomas (Llanelli), I Evans (Llanelli), I Davies (Neath), M Davies (Llanelli), W Proctor (Llanelli), A Thomas (Bristol), R Howley (Bristol), A Lewis (Cardiff), J Humphreys (Cardiff, capt), J Davies (Neath), G Llewellyn (Neath), D Jones (Cardiff), E Lewis (Cardiff), G Jones (Llanelli), H Taylor (Cardiff).

Bowring's vision takes Wales back to the future

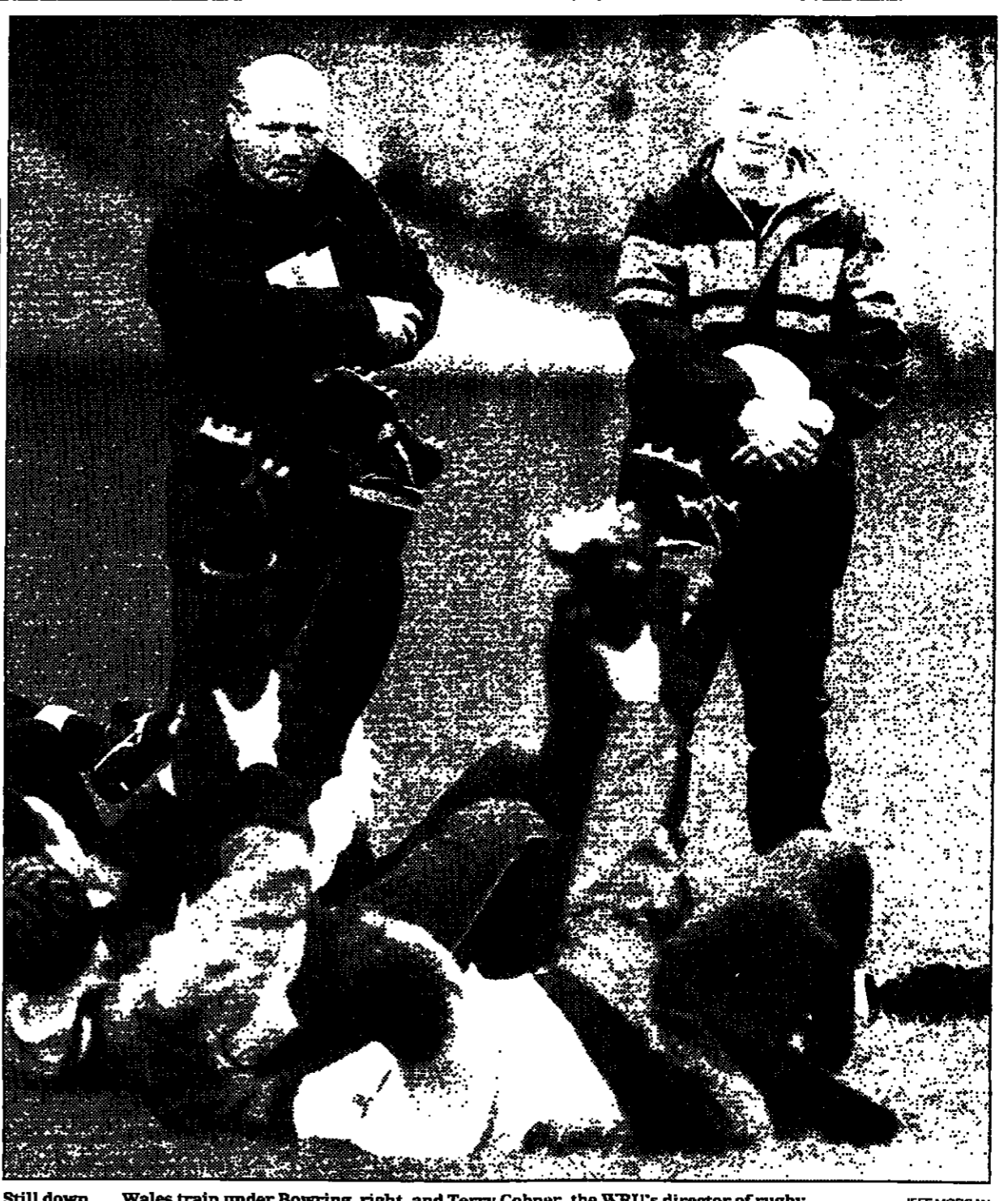
As the Welsh prepare for Twickenham, Frank Keating meets the new boss and finds him emulating an old boss

THE WASTEPAPER bin of any middle-aged sporting back in recent years has been full of scrunched-up resumes devoted to a succession of brightly luminous comings and direly grim goings of Wales's national coaches.

London (the old Borough Road College), where he took in over 350 games for London Welsh — perennially, it seemed, as captain — and one who judge seriously called him "the world's best un-capped flanker".

triumph. They showed the fuzzy monochrome film of that Test series, most of it shot, it seemed, through New Zealand's steaming wintry mists.

north enclosure pulled back in triumph I can still remember the merciful feeling of my feet touching the ground again, although my spine was still walking on air for hours afterwards.



Still down... Wales train under Bowring, right, and Terry Cobner, the WRU's director of rugby

The Welsh defence in the white heat of Twickenham. Leaky. (England to win by 11-15pts: 9/2.)

Ladbrokes advertisement for betting on the England vs Wales match. Includes odds and contact information.

who have seen Twickenham only on television. He has managed what the late Carwyn James pinned for, yet never achieved: total control of selection and strategy.

Okay, I admit, defences are now more manned and organised, the pitch is smaller because the players are far bigger, long ago, with Bowring's father at Neath's Metal Box company, "Remember his song, Duw It's Hard, about pit closures which included the lines 'She's got a job for me'.

Northampton join chase to tempt Johnson away from Leicester

LEICESTER are battling to hold on to their England lock Martin Johnson. The target of three Courage League clubs, Newcastle and Harlequins have already declared their interest and now Northampton have joined the scrum.

term contract worth more than £350,000 to team up with his England colleague Martin Bayfield.

castle Gosforth tomorrow in the derby against West Hartlepool. It will be the wing's first competitive game since the World Cup and a knee operation.

The winger Derek Stark and No. 8 Brian Renwick scored the others and the outside-half Scott Welsh contributed 18 points before being injured late in game that yielded nine tries.

Scotland v France at Murrayfield

French pack the strength to defy the omens

TWO words not to mention together to the Scotland management this week have Grand and Slam. Six years have passed since the Scots achieved such a conjunction but their Five Nations omens are good.

"We have an away win under our belts and that will help us psychologically," said Telfer. "But it also means there will be expectation from the Scottish public for us to beat France. That will put all the pressure on us."

power and superior line-out play should give their dangerous three-quarters plenty of possession.

got stronger as the game wore on, I expect them to be particularly good on their own ball.

Scotland have retained the side which won in Dublin with Brian Redpath and Gregor Townsend continuing the

half-back partnership that was so productive against the Irish.

Murrayfield teams

- SCOTLAND: R Shepherd (Melrose), C Joiner (Melrose), S Hastings (Watsonians), J Jardine (Stirling County), M Dods (Northampton), G Townsend (Northampton), S Redpath (Melrose), D Wilson (Bath), K McKenzie (Stirling County), P Wright (Boroughmuir), S Campbell (Dundee HSFP), D Weir (Newcastle Gosforth), R Wainwright (W Hartlepool, capt), I Smith (Glasgow), E Peters (Bath).
FRANCE: J L Sedouy (Colomeres), E Ntamack (Toulouse), A Ponsard (Brive), T Castaignède (Toulouse), P Saint-André (Montferand), T Lacroix (Dax), P Carbonneau (Toulouse), M Parez (Toulon), J M Gonzalez (Bayonne), C Calizmo (Toulouse), O Merle (Montferand), O Roumat (Dax), A Benstead (Agen), L Cabannes (Racing), F Pelous (Dax).

SportsGuardian

THE BUILD-UP TO TWICKENHAM TAKES ITS TOLL



Lights, camera, action... Rowell looks outwardly calm while doing his best to ignore media pressure during England training in Roehampton yesterday PHOTOGRAPH: FRANK BARON

England at daggers drawn

Richard Williams on the fall-out from a fraught week which has left Jack Rowell and Will Carling at odds with each other

HE PROWLED, he fidgeted, he barely held on to his temper. When he smiled, which was seldom, it looked like a grimace. It had been a week in which the pressure intensified on the England rugby squad, and yesterday their manager showed no sign of enjoying the experience.

On Wednesday, an angry Jack Rowell had ordered the cameras of BBC Wales to be removed from the touchline during an open training session. "That's the difference between losing games and winning games," he barked at his media watchdogs.

By yesterday morning the mood had darkened further. As his forwards worked on the skills of line-out and scrummage which had deserted them in Paris a fortnight ago, the apparent rift between Rowell and his own captain provided the topic of conversation among observers of England's final practice session at the Bank of England ground in Roehampton.

Rowell had failed in his swift attempt to limit the damage caused by Will Carling's revelation that he was no longer consulted on team selection. Nor had an official statement, issued by the Rugby Football Union's press officer, succeeded in providing a convincing rebuttal of Carling's words. As Rowell left the field with the players to return to their hotel yesterday he was reduced to buttonholing the agency reporter who had elicited the original quote from Carling, brusquely ordering him to "put it right".

According to Rowell's aides, Carling had never been a selector, even in the Geoff Cooke era. Rowell explained that under his own system the captain is consulted both before and after the selection is made. But no amount of spin-doctoring could contradict the memories (and the tape recorders) of those who

nevertheless suggested, beneath the usual macho understatement, something other than a total commitment to the idea of the squad's belief in Rowell.

The success and popularity of Carling's team gave English rugby the impetus to enter the age of professionalism. Inheriting a well-grooved side from Cooke, Rowell first presided over a record series of 10 victories before a traumatic defeat in the World Cup semi-final last summer inaugurated the current and less enviable sequence of four defeats in five matches. In some minds, impatient with Rowell's efforts to rebuild the team, a further reverse today against an untried Wales side would call the entire regime into question.

Rowell's long-standing promise to persuade England towards a more enlightened style looked forlorn in the defeat by France two weeks ago. England fell back on the percentage game, with Rowell blaming poor on-field decisions by the senior players, among whom he identified the captain.

Carling's reaction to these suggestions was at first evasive. "I didn't hear him say it, so I'm not going to comment on it," he said, before adding: "Sure, there were some wrong decisions made. But there were far more right ones. People will always make mistakes and I'm not one for dwelling on them, as long as we learn from them. I'm not pointing a finger at anyone."

"This is a very complex time for the England players," Rowell said, suggesting that some of the senior players are performing badly because they miss their old colleagues — "the chaps you're very friendly with, who you

"I'm not really involved in selection but if we don't win on Saturday there is bound to be pressure"

had witnessed Carling's reaction on Thursday to questions about England's selection policy, beginning with one about whether he was aware that, as Rowell had said the previous day, certain players were in danger of being dropped.

"No, I wasn't aware of it," Carling said. "He hasn't asked me to speak to players and he hasn't spoken to me in those terms."

Carling is a confident character, at ease with press conference banter, ready to squash an impertinent questioner with a sardonically raised eyebrow. But at this moment his demeanour was very different: quiet, thoughtful, puzzled, regretful. And those replaying their tapes of the meeting suddenly found themselves listening with new ears to his earlier answer when somebody mentioned David Campese's recent criticisms of Rowell's régime.

Carling was asked if the message to the media, the cadence of his phrases — the unemphatic tone, the upward inflections, the failure to go further —

selector. Had the position changed under Rowell? "I'm not saying anything officially. All I'm saying is that I don't sit in on selections. I used to, with Geoff, but Jack has a different style."

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Bosman effect knocks on

PHILIPPE SELLA will be able to play for Saracens the moment he signs for the club, whatever the International Board says. The European Union yesterday ruled that residency qualifications are illegal and constitute a restraint of trade.

The IB ruled at their annual meeting this week that players wishing to move from one country to another sit out 180 days before being allowed to turn out for their new clubs. The EU begs to differ.

An aide to the employing club, the International Board, said yesterday in Brussels that residency qualifications would breach EU rules on employment as determined in the recent Jean-Marc Bosman case.

"The commissioner made it quite clear the decisions apply to all sports," the aide said. "It would also include rugby."

The Rugby Football Union had planned to bring its residency qualification down from 120 days to a week, but even this may prove illegal.

Tony Hallett, the RFU secretary, has already expressed his concern over the feasibility of implementing the IB rules. "This seems to be a very restrictive move," he said.

Christie homes in on Birmingham

STEPHEN BIERLEY

It had been thought the Olympic champion would run his first indoor race of the season in Stuttgart tomorrow, but a change in schedule means that the crowd in the National Indoor Arena in Birmingham are in for a double treat, with Sally Gunnell making her first appearance in Britain since 1994.

Christie returned to Britain from Australia on Tuesday after winning two 100 metres races in Adelaide and Perth, both hand-timed at 10.00sec. His main opponent will probably be Mike Rosswess who has previously beaten him in Birmingham.

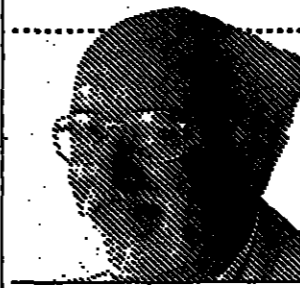
Earlier this week in London, Donovan Bailey, Canada's gold medal winner in

ing in Australia has been progressing and also warn him up for next weekend's more important clash in the same stadium against Bruny Surin of Canada, the world silver medal winner and indoor champion.

Gothenburg, claimed that Christie, who finished sixth at the world championships last summer, had not been injured before that race.

I went to the local state comprehensive. Apart from a bit of bullying, some racial abuse and few bouts of lovesickness, I had little cause to shed boyish tears. The only clue that I was a year younger than my peers was that my report cards used to say I was immature, although this turned out to be a permanent character trait rather than anything to do with my age.
Gary Younge

Keegan and a Batty bit of thinking



David Lacey

KEVIN KEEGAN presumably knows what he is doing. He has not done badly so far. Admittedly the player he wants has a recent history of injuries, but he can still be a formidable opponent. And while some may occasionally feel he should be locked up, he has done nothing that would warrant a call from the Tyneside constabulary yet.

Nevertheless, the question still needs to be put: why on earth should Newcastle United want to sign David Batty, surely the negation of all Keegan has achieved at St James' Park so far?

However, this is no time to attack Batty, one Guardian reader (Graeme Le Saux) having already done as much this season. Maybe Keegan was thinking of applying the principle of *letting the devil you know*. Certainly any manager willing to pay \$5.7 million plus \$26,000 a week for a gun-toting Colombian with a five-year-old knee injury must believe he has God on his side.

Fastino Asprilla would appear to be well-equipped for a Saturday night out in Big Market. He might or might not be the answer to Newcastle's final push for the title. The issue is whether a projected signing of this sort marks the point at which football management becomes merely a series of expensive foreign shopping expeditions.

At least Batty is English. Amid the post-Bosman confusion the fact that ending of limitations on foreigners applied only to EU nationals appears to have been forgotten.

Nearly 10 per cent of those playing in the Premier and English leagues are foreign and the figure is rising. Gordon Taylor, the chief executive of the Professional Footballers' Association, wants the tide stemmed but shares Canute's realisation that this is easier said than done.

Blanket condemnations of the wage demands of some very ordinary footballers are something again. So the attraction of better-equipped imports is understandable. But ultimately they will do no more for English football than they did for the British motor industry.

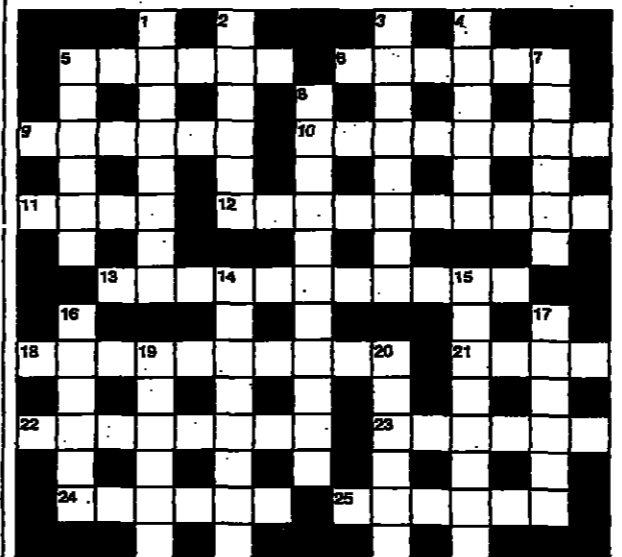
Forty-five years ago Sweden's centre-forward, Hans Jansson, spent three months in London on a business course and during his short stay helped Charlton avoid relegation. Fresh restrictions on overseas players followed but now, with a growing tendency to sign foreigners on short-term contracts, the game has come full circle.

For Hackney Marshes, then, read Pripton Marshes. Not many Rodney Marshes to be found there, either.

Guardian COLLINS Crossword 20,566

A copy of the Collins English Dictionary will be sent to the first five correct entries drawn. Entries to Guardian Crossword No 20,566, Reference Marketing, Harper Collins Publishing, 77-85 Fulham Palace Road, London, W6 8JB, by first post on Friday. Solution and winners in the Guardian on Monday February 12.

Name: _____
Address: _____



Set by Buntborne

- 1 I say! Which doctor has failed degree? Nemat (5)
- 2 Where, initially, Lemuel's alternative projections upset the Academy (5)
- 3, 10 From whom "Th' Egoist" emerged. Right? No way! (5, 8)
- 11 This sailor going into the woods? On the contrary (4)
- 12 A painter leaves Turkey's capital in case blame attaches to last production (5, 5)
- 13 Go-between scientist re-constructs (11)
- 14 He wrote "Abide With Me" in dread of a hell-raiser (4, 6)
- 15 Flora's part in risky endeavours (4)
- 16 See 23
- 17 Moustache manufacturer has a theatrical force, I find (6, 8)
- 18 A Latin-Hindu goddess with a base in the lab (5)
- 19 Not still in Alabama? (5)

- 4 Self-styled scholar made it sound personometric (5)
- 5 Ex-Cathedral adage as a reciprocal diversion? (6)
- 7 Liberal arts having a resurgence: it's immaterial (5)
- 8 Takes the calumet with Amerindian number in disguise (11)
- 14 When the Queen visits the City, one's hat could be raised... (5)
- 15 ... and, still from the City, carried away (5)
- 16 Thus Greek type attracts a Western woman (5)
- 17 Sino-fructiferous content of Caspian cheese (7)
- 18 The call of The Unspeakeable: it almost makes you sick (5)
- 20 Gunners capturing East on the ground (5)

We are sorry that the wrong grid appeared with the crossword in yesterday's Guardian. Congratulations to those readers who succeeded in constructing their own grid

Crossword Solution 20,566

1. I SAY! WHICH DOCTOR HAS FAILED DEGREE? NEMAT (5)
2. WHERE, INITIALLY, LEMUEL'S ALTERNATIVE PROJECTIONS UPSET THE ACADEMY (5)
3, 10. FROM WHOM "TH' EGOIST" EMERGED. RIGHT? NO WAY! (5, 8)
11. THIS SAILOR GOING INTO THE WOODS? ON THE CONTRARY (4)
12. A PAINTER LEAVES TURKEY'S CAPITAL IN CASE BLAME ATTACHES TO LAST PRODUCTION (5, 5)
13. GO-BETWEENS SCIENTIST RE-CONSTRUCTS (11)
14. HE WROTE "ABIDE WITH ME" IN DREAD OF A HELL-RAISER (4, 6)
15. FLORA'S PART IN RISKY ENDEAVOURS (4)
16. SEE 23
17. MOUSTACHE MANUFACTURER HAS A THEATRICAL FORCE, I FIND (6, 8)
18. A LATIN-HINDU GODDESS WITH A BASE IN THE LAB (5)
19. NOT STILL IN ALABAMA? (5)
20. GUNNERS CAPTURING EAST ON THE GROUND (5)

15

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Saturday February 3
1996

The Guardian Outlook

In at the death of old man Dole

Just weeks ago the White House beckoned, but it's all gone wrong again for the Republican nearly-man. JONATHAN FREEDLAND watches his campaign crash

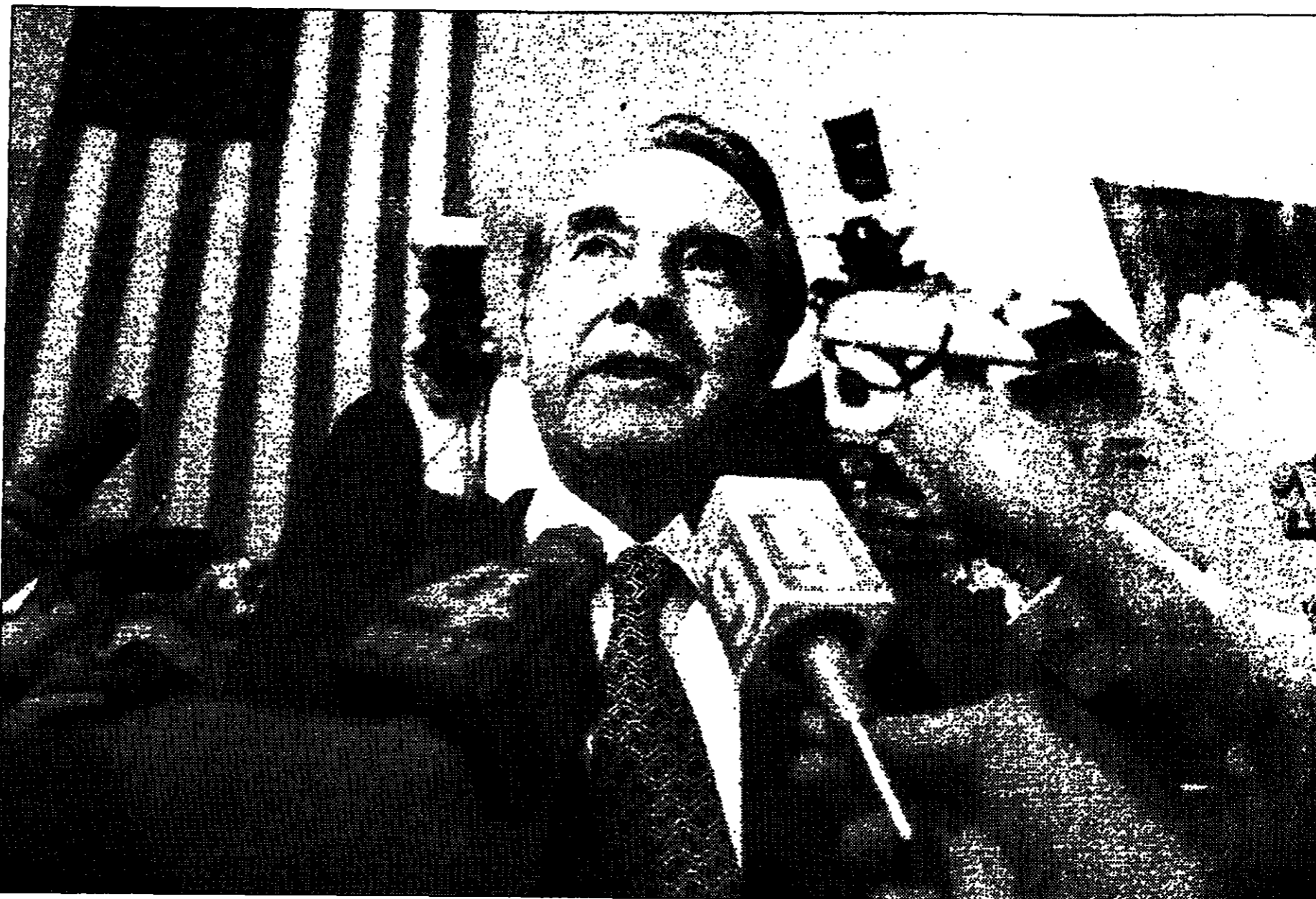


Photo: JOE MARQUETTE

SILENCE is golden, unless you're running for president. If you're running for president, silence is chilly, grey and unwelcome. It's the sound you never want to hear, for it is not silence at all. It is a distress signal.

Bob Dole heard it this week at the Top of the Tree pie factory in Londonderry, New Hampshire (there's a Derry just down the road). The Senate majority leader — who until a few days ago had the words "Republican presidential frontrunner" glued to his name — was engaged in what they call "retail politics", the hand-to-hand combat of meeting real voters in small venues. He was doing the candidate thing — making a campaign stop at a small, new-ish business, shaking hands, posing for cameras, rattling off a short speech.

But there was no noise. He appeared suddenly, mobbed by cameras, boom microphones forming a forest above his head, a fixed smile on his face. He waved in the direction of no one in particular, inspecting a line of processed apples. He nodded and mumbled inconsequentially, as candidates will. He walked along, the governor of New Hampshire on one side, the factory owner on the other. A crowd was there, as hand-picked as the apples. But it remained utterly noiseless, like an audience watching urine. Perhaps they understood that, as extras in a photo-op, they didn't need to make a sound. One silver-haired man, wearing a big Dole sticker, tried to break the silence with a "Hello, Bob!" and a short, weak cheer went up. But the

room soon filled once again with deathly quiet. Such a response is extremely bad news for Bob Dole. It is a sign, as if one were needed, of the deep trouble he's in. Winning candidates make rooms buzz and people jump. Men on their way to the White House inspire a rock star clamour. This was a response for Val Doonican.

But the episode, like the rest of Mr Dole's day in New Hampshire, was revealing not just of the ailing fortunes of the man who until recently believed destiny was about to grasp his hand. It was also an oddly typical moment in what is a singularly strange, comic, shallow, paradoxical and intoxicating process: the election of an American president.

A month ago, the 1996 campaign was already written off as a giant snooze. Bob Dole was a shoo-in, a frontrunner who'd already lapped his opponents. He had the money, the organisation, and, above all, the timing: after two previous attempts, in 1980 and 1988, this year would, at last, be Bob Dole's turn. But US politics, not for the first time, has departed from the script. Bob Dole is no longer the frontrunner: a poll on Thursday in New Hampshire showed him fully nine points behind zillionaire publisher, Malcolm "Steve" Forbes, the tycoon-nerd with Mr Magoo glasses who's come from nowhere to dominate the campaign.

Dole cannot afford to lose New Hampshire, the state whose first-in-the-nation status has made it a King-maker. No Republican has ever won the presidency without winning New Hampshire first, and Dole was supposed to

win it big. Two months ago, polls showed the senator ahead of his rivals by margins of up to 30 per cent.

The shine has gone now, stripped first by Dole's performance giving the Republican response to President Clinton's State of the Union address last week. Dole looked like a mortician, an animated cadaver, his lighting that dwelt cruelly on every line of his 72-year-old face. He stumbled with the autocue, and looked lonely addressing the nation not in a packed, applauding chamber — as Clinton had — but in a sterile office. Where Clinton had been John F Kennedy, Dole was Bela Lugosi.

The rot set in that night, as Republicans drew the conclusion that could disqualify Dole from the nomination — he can't beat Clinton. Days later Newsweek captured the mood, with a brooding cover under the single line: "Doubts About Dole."

The onslaught has been compounded by saturation TV advertising aimed directly at him by Steve Forbes. When the publishing heir isn't hawking his miracle cure flat-tax — 17 per cent rate for everyone — he's been carpet-bombing Dole in what political consultants call the "air war". (Old-fashioned campaigning is the "ground war".)

"Let's face it," the former frontrunner said a few hours after the pie factory, at a dinner for bank managers and computer executives at the Merrimack Chamber of Commerce: "The media is powerful. You buy enough of it, you're going to get your message through." Because he's dipping into his own personal fortune (estimated at roughly

half a billion dollars), Forbes is not bound by the usual campaign spending rules. That means he can buy enough TV time in pivotal states like New Hampshire and Iowa to make his face the brand leader, the Coca-Cola of candidates. Dole friends fear Forbes could do to him what Gary Hart did to Walter Mondale in 1984: damage him so badly in the primaries, that even if he wins the nomination, he's too bruised to take on the president.

But these are just the immediate explanations for that unbidden moment of silence in Londonderry. In fact, the

Winning candidates make rooms buzz. Men on their way to power inspire a rock star clamour. The response to Bob Dole was like one for Val Doonican

candidate, Lamar Alexander, wears a red plaid shirt to telegraph his distance from the "professional politicians up there in Washington". This popular insurgency was first revealed by the outsider candidacy of the billionaire Texan Ross Perot in 1992, and it has only grown since.

Everyone from the radical armed militias to President Clinton now says they oppose big government — and the Congress stands as a symbol of it. The result is that politicians have become forced to denounce the very trade they're in.



For Bob Dole this comes very hard. He cannot play the outsider, because he has lived on the inside for so long; he has been in public office consistently for 46 years, nearly a quarter of the entire history of the Republic.

"He's part of the machine," says Pat Moquin, a businessman. "Too much of an insider, I think." Variations on that theme are offered by everyone you speak to, including those who say they are

"impressed" by Dole and admire him.

All this has a distinctly poignant quality, because it is just such rotten luck. For 36 years, Bob Dole has laboured in the Congress, served on all the right committees, moving patiently up the hierarchy — just as custom dictated you must. In recent years, he has become one of those perennial faces: turn on the TV and there he is, in the chamber, in a suit and tie, even on a Sunday. Tolling away with amendments and procedural motions, while his contemporaries are playing with their grandchildren.

But now it looks like it might all have been for naught — the prize robbed from him by a little rich boy who inherited a fortune and never shared a basement with six siblings in a "hard scramble" mid-western town called Russell, Kansas. (Dole's parents rented out the upstairs of their own home to strangers to make ends meet.)

What's worse, this has happened before. Another rich man, George Herbert Walker Bush, topped Dole in 1988. He was the frontrunner, then too. The final blow came in New Hampshire. Bitter, Bob Dole reminded Americans then that "nobody gave it to me. I didn't have rich and powerful parents. I made it the hard way."

It has been a life of defeat, often at the hand of bad timing: chairman of the Republican Party just as Watergate broke; Gerald Ford's running mate in 1976, when Jimmy Carter won by just 2 per cent; and a brutal wound to the hand in the last days of the second world war

— he has lived in constant and sharp pain ever since.

Now Bob Dole seems to have mistimed what he calls the "one last mission" for his generation — and for him. He appears in front of people who revise the political process, who lap up talk of "revolution" and "abolition", and offers sentences salted with these words: committee, hearing, testify, commission, proposal. His speechwriter is a few steps away, urging him to deliver a grander vision. "I believe this election is a defining moment in our history," he says. But Bob Dole is not looking the crowd in the eye; he's reading the line off a cue card. "I hope he can play the long-in-winter card," says Bill Kristol, editor of the conservative Weekly Standard. "There's something moving about the guy's stoicism."

Moving, yes, but painful, too. There is a twinge of the unpleasant about a political process that asks a 72-year-old man to stand in a car dealer's showroom in Nashua, New Hampshire, and sell himself like a used Buick — and to repeat the pitch over and over again for the better part of two years. Dole's aides refer to this last strait of the campaign as "closing the sale" — but there's not a business in the world that would ask its salesmen to undergo an ordeal like this.

"Running for president requires the discipline to be repetitive," says Texas rival Phil Gramm, and he's right. Candidates have to repeat the same speech until their gums bleed; journalists have to cover events that are not events, but kabuki theatre in which nothing real happens.

Advisors have to say things they know are not true — "I couldn't be more pleased with the way things are going," says Dole communications director Mark Will — and reporters report them anyway.

The centrality of the media cannot be overstated: campaign events are not for the people there, but the cameras watching them. Dole toured a micro brewery on Wednesday, sampling a beer called Old Man Ale, which he pronounced "young and fresh". Earlier an aide had cancelled the stop, fearing the obvious headlines. The governor of New Hampshire then intervened on the brewery's behalf. In other words, an event whose sole purpose was media attention was cancelled because of fears of media attention — thereby ensuring media attention.

The whole insane spin cycle is compelling as sport, and American voters follow it more closely than most foreigners would believe. But presidential politics is a world of its own. The new, anonymous author of hit novel Primary Colors — which depicts the 1992 Democratic primary season — remarks that the candidates and their staffs live "outside time", sleeping little, eating at midnight, never at rest. But sometimes "the campaign falls away and you remember: other people just have lives. Their normality can seem a reproach. It hurts your eyes, like walking out of a matinee into bright sunlight." The trouble for Bob Dole is that he's been indoors for too long.

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Policing a global village

LET NO ONE think that the US Telecommunications Bill — which was overwhelmingly approved by Congress yesterday — is simply an American affair.

could trigger a wave of censorship which could undermine the libertarian culture of the Net while seeming to contradict the First Amendment's protection of freedom of speech.

More positively, the bill also makes it mandatory for all future television sets to be equipped with a "V chip" enabling parents to prevent their children from watching unsuitably violent or explicit films unless they key in a password.

The final lesson for Britain from the bill is that the Government should free British Telecom to compete freely with the cable companies.

Taxing time for graduates

FREE tuition at university is coming to an end. Some may rightly say it ended some years ago.

Tory ministers have ducked behind the vice chancellors. Three years ago John Patten declared: "I am going to sit back and wait for the radical movement that is coming from the universities."

Radical new ways of using existing facilities were examined: 45 instead of 30-week academic years, seven-day-a-week lectures, two-year degrees.

The Education Secretary next week when they will urge her to set up a long-term review of government funding.

Until now universities have concentrated on squeezing costs. By 1990 the old polytechnics and some universities were receiving about one third less per pupil than a decade earlier.

The need is to maintain pressure on all three main political parties. Labour talked two years ago about tuition contributions from better-off students but postponed its paper in the hope ministers would have to move first.

Armageddon may be receding but no country is yet prepared to jettison nuclear weapons or the ambition to own them.



Bargaining with the Bomb

EVERY major nation comes to negotiations over nuclear disarmament with its own special history of involvement in the seductive and terrible mystery of these weapons.

What the talks are about is the terms on which nations can live with each other in a world where these devices have lost less of their allure than we had hoped.

This week in Geneva the Swedes called on China to follow France's example and end testing, and the Austrians, South Africans and Japanese also welcomed France's decision.

Russia, whose moratorium on testing renewed the hopes that a comprehensive test ban treaty could be achieved, is as attached to the symbolism of nuclear weapons as any country.

As for India, it is ironic that the whole test ban concept, now over 40 years old, springs from an Indian initiative.

Smallweed



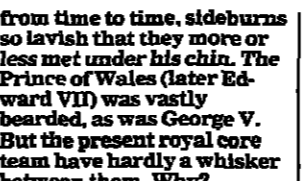
SMALLWEED is incessantly asked: who was the last British politician to appear at the Cabinet table wearing a beard?

ered without a second's hesitation, is always the same: I haven't the slightest idea.



Jenkins's recent biography shows at least five certain beards in a field of 14.

NOT CONTENT with the constant mouthing of soundbites, today's leading politicians have developed a ghastly taste for catchphrases.



PARTY SAYS ONE THING BUT DOES ANOTHER (SOTADA). Debates and question sessions all week have been peppered with SOTADAs.

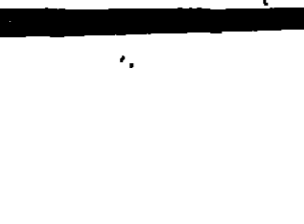
MAY have asked this before, but no one answered, so I'll ask it again.

used to keep goal for Portsmouth FC under the alias A C Smith, would never have stood for it.

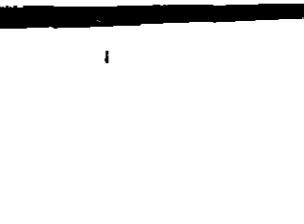
Children of the evolution



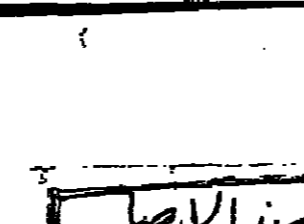
When the storing of fertilised ova by freezing became possible, it was decided in law that five years was a reasonable time to keep them.



Right now we need some guidelines — we have a broadly agreed vocabulary, and some not necessarily conscious storylines, or myths, to shape our thoughts.



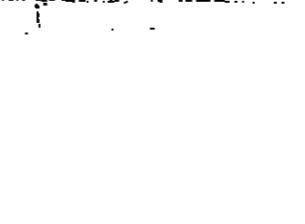
Right now we need some guidelines — we have a broadly agreed vocabulary, and some not necessarily conscious storylines, or myths, to shape our thoughts.



These literary myths obviously do still inform us, but not very usefully.



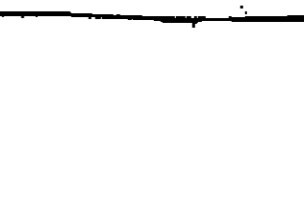
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These literary myths obviously do still inform us, but not very usefully.



Work... yers call a... the new be... network... Edward Pil...

Shott... What a... stands the...

Hands across the Atlantic



Martin Kettle

NEW LABOUR being what it is, there is little doubt where its most eagerly received by-election news of the past week came from, and it was not from Hemsworth. Winter bye-elections in the Yorkshire coalfield are a necessary duty for the men and women who run the disciplined machine that is the modern Labour Party, but even the chance to bury Arthur Scargill's first party challenge in the new round hardly sets the progressive blood coursing as it once did, especially in February.

New Labour's really welcome news came from gentler climes thousands of miles away on the Pacific coast. It came from the state of Oregon, where we learned this week that Sir Francis Drake once pitched his camp and where on Wednesday the Democrat candidate Ron Wyden captured a Senate by-election from the previously all-conquering Republicans after the incumbent had been forced to resign in a sexual harassment scandal. In itself, Wyden's defeat of his Republican opponent for the vacant Senate seat is of little practical consequence even in America, where Newt Gingrich's Republican majority remains securely in control, let alone here in Britain. Its indicative value, on the other hand, is something else. It tells Tony Blair a story which he very much wants to hear.

There's a revealing anecdote in the long profile of Blair which appeared in this week's issue of the New Yorker. Reporter Sidney Blumenthal asks Peter Mandelson whether this autumn's US presidential contest will be a crucial event for New Labour. "Clinton win? Not important," Mandelson responds. "Nothing. No effect." But then, Blumenthal reports, Mandelson starts to bite his nails and shake his feet entirely mock fear at the prospect.

Ron Wyden's victory in Oregon this week does not guarantee that there will be a Tony Blair government in Britain some time soon, but it is a pretty good sign that there will. The election, as seen by Mandelson and others, is straightforward. Wyden's win throws the Republicans into turmoil, opens up the contest for the Republican presidential nomination still further, thus weakening the Republican challenge to Clinton, who wins re-election in November, making John Major's politics look anachronistic and giving Blair's victory in spring 1997 a sense of inevitability and harmony with the times.

This may all be too neat for comfort. With Bob Dole labouring under the free-spending assault of Steve Forbes in the run-up to the New Hampshire primary, the call has gone out once again to draft a reluctant General Colin Powell for the Republican ticket. If anything were to come of that, Clinton's grip on the black vote would weaken and the re-election strategy might go horribly awry for the Democrats.

It's taking a while for it to sink in — my future is more secure. It's been a long haul and I learnt how to deal with it. But you can only cope with being temporary so long."

Office strategists, it will be one down, one to go. Can't you just see Brian Mahoney unveiling one of those stupid posters? It may never happen anyway, not least because Britain may well find itself going to the polls before America but also because elections are always settled on the home front, not as part of some supposed global trend. Common sense scepticism, you may say, yet it is surprising how many political professionals believe that the connections matter.

Perhaps this is just because they enjoy flying to America every couple of years — who would not? — to check on the latest election techniques. Perhaps it is because our political class is still beguiled by the belief that what happens in the last American election will happen in our next one; there's a lot of that about too, in all parties. Or perhaps — and this needs to be taken rather more seriously than it has been so far — the New Labour project has always been rather specially defined in an Anglo-American context. Intellectually, it is, as the New Yorker profile of Blair suggests, a Transatlantic Project.

Blair would deny this, I think. He would say that New Labour's mind is open to any interesting ideas and political lessons, wherever they come from. He would point out that he has always taken a special interest in Australia, which is true, and that his recent visit to the Far East underlines his openness to what is happening there too, which is also true. He would say that in the new world of global markets and international deregulation, all parties and governments must take account of all such lessons anyway. And then he would stress, above all, that New Labour has to reach its own solutions and that nobody's blueprint can be transplanted unamended from one country to another anyway.



The way it was... dockers queue up to seek casual work in Liverpool in the sixties. For many today, lack of security has returned to the world of work

Working backwards

Employers call it flexibility but to the new breed of contract workers it just means greater insecurity, says EDWARD PILKINGTON

IF THE cliché that our self-image is largely defined by our work is still valid in these fluid, high technology times, then Gary Taylor must have a pretty peculiar picture of himself. "I don't know anybody else who has had as many jobs as I have," he says with understatement. Which is just as well. Over the past 10 years he has held down no less than 14 jobs.

He works in the fibreglass industry, a business notorious for the fluctuations in its fortunes. For Taylor, a decade of loyal service making and fitting fibreglass car parts, bathroom suites and other household goods has been as comfortable and cosy as a rickety roller-coaster ride.

For most of those years he was frequently on the road, travelling to jobs completed on site and spending weeks, even months, away from home. When trade was good he would be run off his feet, when it hit a trough he would be shown the door with barely a week's notice.

It came as some consolation that he was never unemployed for more than two weeks at a time, but it was hardly a regular life. More like a permanent state of limbo, he says. "Some people couldn't handle it. But after a while I

just got used to being temporary — I just worked as hard as I could, rarely took time off, never went sick and kept my fingers crossed."

Taylor does not exactly fit the stereotype of the semi-skilled worker: that Soviet realist image of sturdy men — always men — streaming through factory gates as the whistle blows; same time, same place, day after day. But his experience of work as a transient, turbulent, shifting condition is becoming increasingly the norm.

Temporary work is as old as agriculture, which has always ebbed and flowed with the seasons. But latest official figures show that the instability bug is rapidly spreading out of seasonal sectors and is beginning to infect areas normally perceived as rock solid.

The number of temporary workers as a whole has grown by a third in the past five years, to 1.5 million — and in contrast to the Soviet realist stereotype more than half of them are women. A report published this week revealed that the growth is more noticeable in some sectors than others, and nowhere more than on the factory floor. Manufacturing has seen an increase in its numbers of workers in temporary posts of nearly 70 per cent.

What these dry statistics tell us is that a wind of change is sweeping across British industry. Employers say the change is towards greater flexibility, efficiency and competitiveness in a harsh global economy. Unions see it more as change towards greater insecurity, falling wages and diminished rights.

"There is a lot said against temporary work," says Lillian Bennett, chairman of Manpower, the country's largest job-placement agency. "But little is said about the advantages to individuals. In an increasingly competitive world, temporary work has got to be better than no work at all."

The wind of change has blown in with it a new vocabulary. The concept of transience has been zapped up and repackaged, like the process of sprucing up or foliating politicians. In an attempt to make a virtue out of necessity, advocates have strived to add glamour and remove ancient stigmas. So out goes the plain English description "temporary work". In comes the new buzz word: short-term contracts.

The glitz looks distinctly tarnished, however, when viewed from the position of those at the sharp end. Sus Worby is a convener of the Transport and General Workers' Union at a Glaxo Wellcome plant in Ware, Hertfordshire, which makes pharmaceutical drugs. She now has a permanent position with the company, but a few years ago she was employed on a short-term basis.

"The contrast is extraordinary. My husband also used to be temporary and he suffered

from eczema with the worry. Money came in sporadically, and I can remember when we had to eat semolina made with water — that's how hard it was." Now they "want for nothing", she says, and are able to look ahead. But with her union hat on she contrasts to witness the impact that insecurity can have on people's lives.

At present Glaxo Wellcome employs relatively few temporary workers — only 20 out of more than 1,000 staff — but with seasonal variations, that number can rise.

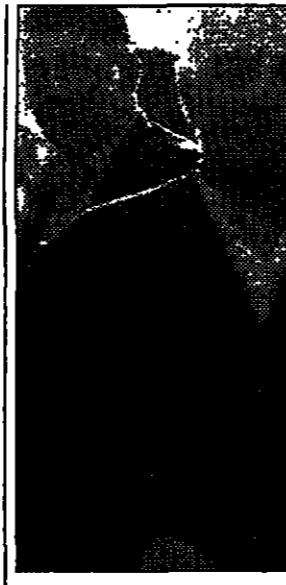
"The hardest thing is working for six or eight months and then being told you're not needed any more. One lady was sent off site on a Friday and called back to work on the Monday. Imagine how it felt for her being jobless one minute and back at work the next."

The ripple of uncertainty passing through the heart of British manufacturing has long been an intimate feature of employment in other walks of life, from catering to public services. Anne — she asked for her real name not to be used — works as an unqualified nursing assistant in a hospital in southern England. She has been on short-term contracts for the past six years, gradually working her way up the casual ladder.

She began as the lowest of the low — a "bank" worker, which meant she was effectively on monthly contracts. "I worked regularly on the same ward for two years, but it didn't feel like that as I never knew if I would be working month to month."

She gradually improved her lot and has now succeeded in ascending to the dizzy heights of someone on a two-year contract. The problem is that it terminates next February, and she is already fretting about what lies ahead. With two small children at home, a return to irregular shift patterns would destroy her domestic calm.

Employers are moving into short-term contracts because it allows them to fine-tune labour costs according to the amount of work available. It spares them costly and cumbersome redundancy procedures and makes them arguably more customer sensitive. The fashion has been set by so-called "just-in-time" practices



Fear of losing even badly paid work haunts many

Snotty toffs in tabloidese shocker

Why can't posh writers hack it like a real hack? SIMON HOGGART defends the wordcraft of the much-maligned tabloid journalist

EVERYBODY seems to think they can write like the tabloid news-papers, but almost nobody can. This creates towering embarrassment for readers when even competent novelists try their hand at writing the Sun. You'll have seen the kind of thing, often produced by thriller writers who pride themselves on their gritty depiction of Britain as "Pomfret."

"Look at this," Pomfret said Inspector Figgis, handing his assistant a copy of the Daily Globe. The lurid headline read: Dreadful Discovery at Edgecombe Grange. The article began: "There was a dreadful discovery yesterday at Edgecombe Grange, the mansion of Sir Ephraim Malfeesor, the prominent financier. Pettigrew, Sir Ephraim's long-serving butler, had entered the conservatory late on Tuesday night carrying his

master's habitual nightcap of brandy and soda, when he was shocked to discover he had stumbled upon the bloodstained body of the noted merchant banker."

"Ambulance crews were summoned from the West Loamshire Hospital, but Sir Ephraim was found to be suspicious circumstances. Officers from Scotland Yard have been alerted..."

"I made that up, but you'll have read similar disasters. I was reminded of them again by the publication this week of Rebecca Currie's new novel, A Woman's Place. One of her characters is a sleazy tabloid journalist who is thought by his employers to be a brilliant writer."

Yet Mrs Currie's account of his account of the Prime Minister's resignation begins thus: "Today at the Conservative Party Conference the Prime Minister dropped the biggest bombshell of his career. As delegates prepared to deliver the traditional standing ovation — expected to last six or seven minutes as usual — a dramatic change came over the man who has led the nation for the last six years."

"In a shock departure from his standard text, in which he was to call for national renewal and a revival of Tory values..."

Mr Betts does not mention that the Prime Minister has resigned until his fourth paragraph, 138 words into his article, a piece which would get him sacked from the humblest parish magazine.

Here he is again, putting the dampers on a story about a gay MP. "I saw it happen! TORY YOBBO IN GAY PUNCH UP SCANDAL. Dramatic resignation after arrest. The latest scandal to rock the Tory Party exploded in the gloom of Hampstead Heath at seven o'clock last night. As darkness descended, Junior Health Minister Tony York was arrested by police and charged with causing an

affray. He spent the night in cells and will appear in court this morning..."

I don't want to be too rude about Mrs Currie's work, since I could not do it myself — but this ersatz journalism makes one's teeth fur over.

Here I must break a small confidence. I happened to be present in Alice Springs, Australia, at the first meeting between the Prince of Wales and Andrew Morton, who later wrote Princess Di, Her True Story.

It was at a cocktail party to mark the start of Charles and Diana's first tour abroad. Technically these events are off the record, but we can always pretend I was actually eavesdropping on a mobile phone.

PRINCE Charles asked, in his diffident way, which papers we wrote for. Andrew Morton told him he was on the Daily Star. The Prince inquired why he had gone into journalism, and Mr Morton said that ever since he'd been a boy, he had yearned to write.

"In that case," said Charles (I have a memory of

I was that original head-scratching Fast-Track Kid

GARY YOUNGE has a tip for Mr Blair

WHEN I was four years old I used to scratch my head until it bled. My nursery school teacher caught me in the act, with a fist full of soap, and referred me to a child psychologist who diagnosed boredom and recommended that I be sent to infant school at the first opportunity.

And so I skipped a year of playing with stickle bricks and tentatively pulled out on to what Tony Blair has now christened the "fast track" of a future Labour government's educational superhighway. As a robust and precocious toddler, with a mother for a teacher and two elder brothers to slap me into a socially acceptable shape, it was quite an uneventful journey.

Unlike the editor of the Daily Telegraph, Charles Moore, who wrote this week about his experiences of being fast-tracked at Eton, I was not daunted by the prospect of "composing Latin verses and Greek prose". At the end of his first term Mr Moore came

and the nickname "grade A boy". Fast-tracking is one option that might suit certain children, in certain schools, from certain backgrounds as it did me. But it does not add up to a national policy. Nor is it anything new; the solution to my head-scratching was found in 1973.

Worse still I could have actually become a nerd. I still recall watching the famously obnoxious Ruth Kennedy on John Craven's Newsround, the walls of her bedroom covered with geometric equations and her proud father intervening every time an interviewer asked her if she wouldn't rather have some friends than lots of top grade A-levels at the age of 10. She is now 24, and resents being "head-track" — a method of examining geometric constructions — at a scientific institute near Paris. She still lives with her father who still answers her questions for her. All of which goes to show that however fast the track there are no short cuts for producing well-rounded human beings.

There is, however, a very easy way to stunt their growth: put them in the slow lane. Categorising children as remedial is bad enough. But force a child of 15 to sit in a class of 13 year-olds and watch them in a lifelong, uphill struggle for self-esteem because they have had "I am thick" tattooed on their foreheads.

A prayer for the refugee

FEW people are even aware that an increasing number of asylum seekers in this country will have no money to live on, and no right to work. No wonder, in view of the poor coverage given by the Guardian and other media to the savage new regulations Peter Lilley has proposed. Asylum seekers are the forgotten minority among the FTP, the forgotten 30 per cent of our nation.

Anyone claiming to be an asylum seeker, and who has received a first decision against their claim, cannot receive any benefit support while they make an appeal. Currently, a high proportion of such people are still awaiting a decision, and may well need to appeal if refused. They will not receive any benefit while they wait for an answer, and will not be allowed to work during the first six months in this country. The fact is that a higher proportion of cases are adjudged to be genuine on appeal than they are on the first hearing. Starving people cannot wait long enough for their case to be heard.

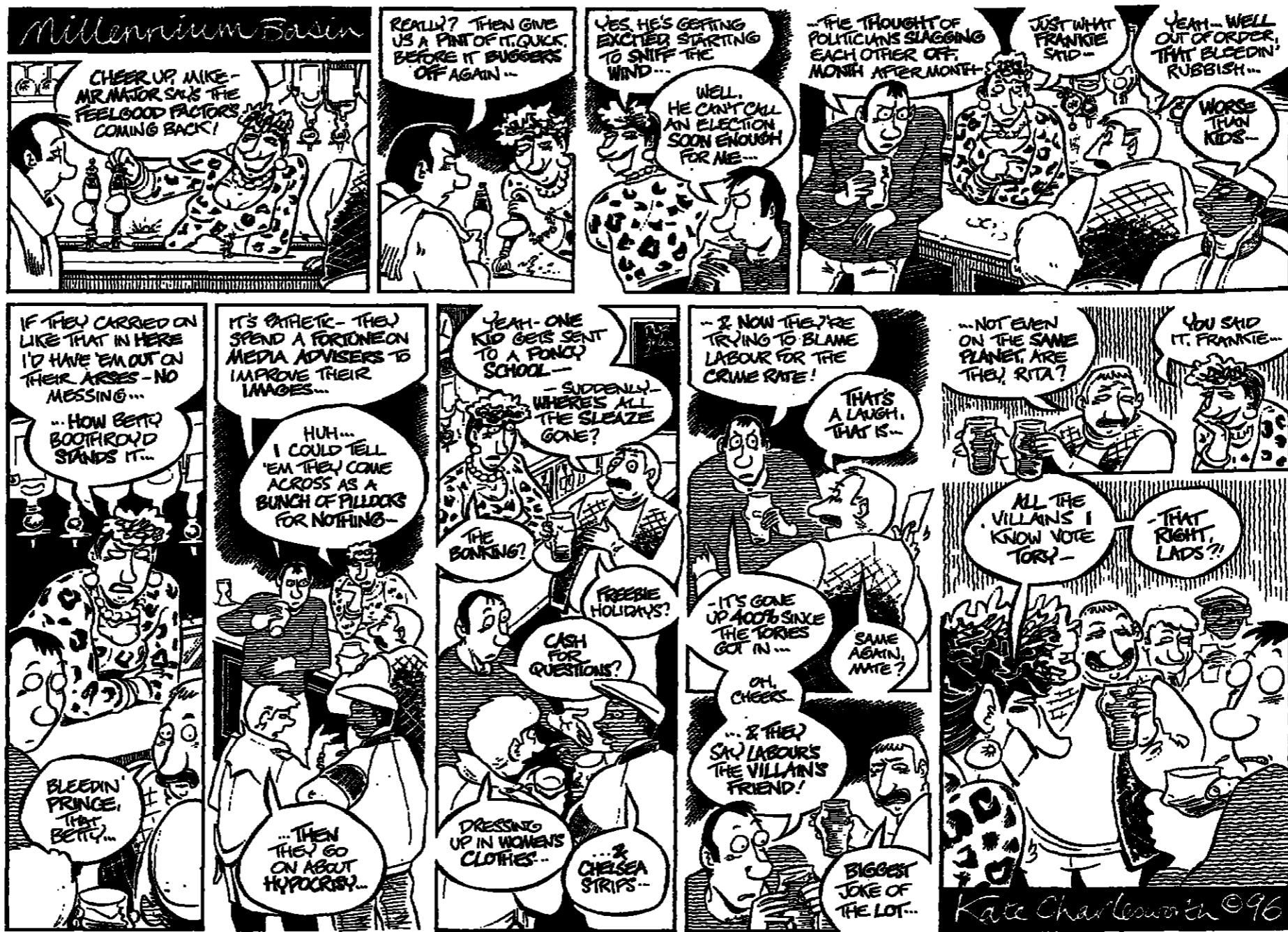
The Home Secretary is trying to ensure that all such decisions are made at the point of entry. A refugee arriving here from a situation of persecution is immediately in a strange surroundings, unknown procedures including a 75-question form to be filled in, possibly no knowledge of English, an unknown and necessary interpreter, a fear of authorities, and no legal representation. It is not

surprising that many come in, therefore, and make their claim to be asylum seekers after a few weeks. Such people may well be genuine. To remove all means of support from them as they seek to get a full and fair hearing of their case is a deep betrayal of how any country ought to deal with people who are possibly genuine refugees.

We can only assume that no political party is willing to sustain a just system of dealing with refugees, because of the unpopularity of their cause at the polls.

Four vote catchers can afford to ignore the FTP, what hope for refugees within that thirty per cent. There have to be ways in which asylum seekers have their claims properly examined in a world full of refugees. As Christians believe that this way does not even begin to measure against the standard of justice and mercy which a nation is required to uphold. What we do with refugees today, we will do to others who have no political redress tomorrow.

Rt Rev Peter Hall, Bishop of Woolwich.
Rt Rev Whitfield Wood, Bishop of Croydon.
Rt Rev Roger Sainsbury, Bishop of Barking.
Ven Clive Young, Archdeacon of Hackney.
Ven Douglas Bartles-Smith, Archdeacon of Southwark.
Ven Peter Broadbent, Archdeacon of Northolt, Diocese of Southwark, 88 Hillyfields Crescent, London SE4 1QA.



The dishonourable consul

THE attempt by the British Embassy in Athens to pressurise Cambridge University Press to stop publication of Anastasia Karakostou's work will come as little surprise to writers on the southern Balkans (Academic uproar at banned book, February 2).

My own book, *The Greeks - Land and People Since the War*, was translated into Greek recently and published in Athens by a commercial firm, which had a normal commercial contract with Penguin Books here. I was astonished to be told by an acquaintance in the diplomatic service that I had been attacked at an internal Foreign Office meeting as a "troublemaker" by the then ambassador in Athens, Sir Oliver Niles, and that the book could "raise hell". This bilious attack turned out to rest on the fact that the book contains a short chapter on the Macedonian issue, although my views are a good deal closer to those of the Greek government than those of its opponents, and most of the chapter is devoted to a very elementary analysis of what the problem seems to me to be about.

The point is nothing really to do with the value of the work of any particular writer. There is a hidden - or, in-

creasingly, not so hidden - agenda in MBE and the FC0 to prevent discussion of the issue, and any means, including really low political chicanery of this sort will do. The distinguished historian of Bosnia, Dr Noel Malcolm, has been subjected to the same treatment. My other intellectual "crime" - I think - has been to suggest that the orthodoxies that have dominated British policy towards Greece since the civil war are in urgent need of overhaul. The attitudes of Miles and his numerous ilk in the FC0 rest on a crude response to these suggestions, however formulated, as the problem of the Slav-speaking people in Greece is essentially tied up with the second world war, like so much else in the modern Balkans. There are still residual guilty consciences in Whitehall about our role in the defeat of the left, and this is what is underneath the apparently irrational paranoia of these dreadful ambassadors.

James P. O'Rourke, St Antony's College, Oxford OX2 8JF.

Letters to the Editor may be faxed on 0171 837 4630 or sent by post to 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3SF, and by e-mail to letters@guardian.co.uk.

New heads of argument

WHEN I saw the inaccurate statements issued by my article (Good grammar, February 1), I was afraid it might mislead the many. And so it proved. It rather makes my point about how we prefer old social arguments to new educational ones.

Let me, briefly, try again. On the local agencies of school choice, parents will simply do their muddled best in the unchosen circumstances in which they find themselves. I doubt there is much more to be said on that front. The real issue now is to fulfil the original comprehensive promise of excellence for all, especially in those places where performance is poor. It is the moment to reinvent the comprehensive principle, not to bury it.

But that means a radical educational agenda, not an old social one. It also means (as I said, Roy Hattersley please note) a commitment to a decade of sustained investment around clear objectives. This should be the Radical Moderniser's Orthodoxy. Tony Wright MP, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA.

Salvoes fired at the Western canon

HENRY PORTER'S assault on cultural studies (Trivial pursuit, February 1) is the latest ill-informed attack on the teaching of cultural, communication and media studies in British universities. It would be nice if just one of these recurrent allegations of a decline in literary, cultural and scholarly standards managed to stick. I am not claiming that everyone should be able to translate the entire works of Virgil, but this ignorance is, I fear, symptomatic of a general deficiency.

I am not claiming that everyone should be able to translate the entire works of Virgil, but this ignorance is, I fear, symptomatic of a general deficiency.

Tom Vadden-Smith, 21 Southminster Road, Roath, Cardiff CF2 5AT.

HENRY PORTER unfavourably compared the supposedly laissez-faire populism of modern British culture to "countries where people still read books (the former Soviet Union)". I can't speak for other former Soviet republics but, in Russia itself, there are as many avid consumers of tabloid newspapers, soap operas, sex manuals and tordid fiction, and as many practitioners of graffiti, as in the West. Complaints by serious writers, especially poets, about the indifference of Russian readers to their work have become routine. And even in Soviet days, most Rus-

sians' experience of high culture was limited to a few assiduously propagated classics (Swan Lake, Pushkin's most anthologised poems, Tolstoy's War and Peace).

Today, while some in Russia rival George Steiner in polymathic sweep of knowledge, the vast majority are neither better nor worse read than their counterparts here. The Soviet Union was no more a haven of intellectualism than it was a workers' paradise.

(Dr) Catriona Kelly, Lecturer in Russian Language and Literature, School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University of London.

BY "culture" does Porter mean "a shared knowledge system"? If so, it is both likely and desirable that this is changing. To bemoan the loss of the shared knowledge system held by those "crucially" who the education started before the last war" seems more to do with Porter's fear of age and death than the disappearance of standards. Peter Stannack, 26 Park Road East, Ashington Rd, Northumberland NE63 8AE.

HENRY PORTER complains of the sloppy, prejudiced thinking of the modern age. He then makes a sloppy, prejudiced claim that I consider graffiti and Rembrandt to be of equal value. This would be as silly as claiming that Henry Porter and an accurate journalist were of equal value.

Terry Eagleton, Warton Professor of English Literature, St Catherine's College, Oxford OX1 3UJ.

DID the great majority of us ever know the central biblical and classical quotes? and are our inner spaces any less cluttered with trivia than the great medieval thinkers who devoted so much time to the number of angels dancing on a pinhead?

Did relativism go to bed with mass marketers, or was it a necessary intellectual development preceding world and responding to mass popular mediums? And who set the agenda for these mass mediums but the business elites trained at the great institutions of learning, taught by intellectuals? As for "novels high on the shelf unread", how do you know?

Western culture, along with its political hegemony, is on the wane. Mediterranean culture is learning to live with eastern cultures and western information technology. Our intellectual culture can still learn a thing or two and could certainly make itself more accessible.

Michael O'Donoghue, 20 Lansdown Road, London BN1 1DR.

I COULDN'T help contrasting Henry Porter's article on "dumbing down" with the latest wheeze from Tony Blair about "fast-tracking". Although this one will probably have been overtaken by a new gimmick by the time I get this letter jammed into the fax machine, it's still puzzling that middle class parents are alleged to be so keen to force their children's pace of growth when the culture these selected kids are destined for (including that of their fond parents) is furiously dumbing down. Where is the fast track going to? And what's in the luggage-rack? Nicholas Murray, The Rack, Kinnerton, Freston, Powys LD6 2PF.

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FRIENDS OF THE EARTH GREENPEACE

CUT TRAFFIC NOT TREES.

Its not rite

FIXED penalty notices should be attached to Sainsbury's shelves (Letters, February 1). Some of the own-brand paste tell us "... a paste is often added to the sauce in it's pan". We learn of "mens" something or other. We see shelves stocked with CD's and the company does not know if it is everyone's favourite ingredient or everyone's enemy. With such poor attention to detail, it is no wonder that profit is falling.

Norman T. Shepherd, 4 Loggatts, 65/67 Alveyn Park, London SE21 8AS.

A tour of the religious quarter

YES, mass attendance has been falling off for a number of years and is now in a state of free fall (Catholic Church losing mass appeal, January 30). The reasons are to be found within the Church herself for the past 30 years. Hierarchy and clergy have failed to speak with clarity, conviction and unanimity; abuses (especially where liturgy is concerned) are tolerated while initiatives that have proven to be damaging continue.

High profile dissidents proud views that are diametrically opposed to the traditional teaching of the Church and are not silenced, leaving many Catholics ignorant and confused.

M C Flynn, 21 The Sigers, Field End Road, Eastcote, Pinner, Middlesex HA5 2QJ.

Off the active list

YOUR article (Labour drops all women shortlists, February 1) is misleading. As the person directly involved in presenting the legal challenge to the all-women shortlists, I cannot possibly see how any appeal hearing could affect the lawfulness of the 34 selections which have not been legally challenged.

Indeed, any appeal court could only consider issues in relation to the three seats challenged at the Leeds Tribunal.

If the NEC of the Labour Party have been given such advice they should seek a further opinion.

Peter Jepson, 7 Moss Gardens, Feltham, Middlesex TW18 4JF.

Lord of all he betrays

ONCE again Lord Melchett demands the right to reply to any criticism of his fiefdom, Greenpeace UK (Letters, February 2). It was not the Guardian suggesting that Greenpeace has gone soft, but myself, former action coordinator for Greenpeace UK and Greenpeace International.

For the record:

- Nearly all the people involved in the planning of the Brent Spar and Mururose actions have been either sacked or made redundant;
- Lord Melchett has downgraded his own direct action department from five full-time positions to just two;
- The Greenpeace action in Tiananmen Square was carried out to deflect criticism in

A Country Diary

NORTH DERBYSHIRE: The narrow lane, an ancient way used in prehistory, curls up the flank of the moor, an open track boldly fronting the steep slope so that it must have always been unpopular with packmen and carters. On a midwinter night, I wandered up it under an ink-black sky in which the bright moon hung, unobscured by any cloud. My lane was a silver ribbon leading to the heavens; no breeze stirred the last skeletons of bogweed on the verge. Over to my left, beyond a silent paddock, I could make out the back of the hillside farm against the stars. No sparks flew from its low chimney stack, no glimmer of lamplight through mullioned windows for the last occupant had died a couple of weeks earlier. He was the last of a line of hill folk who had farmed here for generations and this last generation were unmarried. No point in going through the gate again; there'd be no response to knocking at the green, house-plate door. It's a building now

Without spirit, like a wreck

without spirit, like a wreck cast up on an empty shore, so I kept on towards the shining hilltop and saw shooting stars. Standing on that silvery mound a far-off sound brought to mind John Clare's waking fox "renew his short gruff bark" and, as I went along it, was confirmed. The strident call was closer now, issuing from a black spinney at the foot of the next field. Then came a squeal; certainly not a fox-call; more likely the "dread evening shrieks" of Clare's badger echoes. Though I waited in the moonlight some time, neither fox nor badger uttered their calls again and, on going down by the black spinney, there occurred the thought that Clare wouldn't really have been at home up here on the slanting hillsides. He was a poet of the fertile lowlands and probably never saw such heights as these. Even so, the genius of his universal language fits this landscape just as well as that of the south-east Midlands.

ROGER REDFERN

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Lord Wakeham, the press watchdog, is the ultimate fixer with a finger in every important pie. Photograph by GRAHAM TURNER

Oiling along rather nicely, thanks

The MEGAN TRESIDDER



INTERVIEW

JOHN WAKEHAM does not look like a figure to make a journalist nervous. Rumply-faced, rumpled-suited, his trousers held up with braces, he looks, at the age of 63, like many other Tory grandees in the House of Lords. He is a veteran of the Conservative Party, serving it for 18 years until 1992 and earning the nickname of Mr Fixit because of his skill at behind-the-scenes jobs. He was Chief Whip, Leader of both the Commons and the Lords, and Lord President of the Council (as well as Energy Secretary). What a wit once said about another politician could be applied to Wakeham: he is a man who has "risen without trace".

It was the Brighton bomb in 1984, which, tragically, made him well-known. It killed his wife, and left him trapped under rubble for seven hours, severely damaging his legs, which still cause him pain. He has remained loyal to Mrs Thatcher's former secretary, and lives in Hampshire. He has three children, the youngest is nine. To journalists, Wakeham is something more. As chairman of the Press Complaints Commission he is the headmaster no one wants to be called in to see. He and his commission can humiliate journalists publicly by upholding complaints against them. This week marked the end of his first year in a job, celebrated with a party which, being full of brags, he admits "went on a bit". He also issued journalists with an end-of-year report: "You are cleaning up your act. Keep at it and remember we have teeth that bite." It was a nice phrase that the one used by his predecessor, Lord McGregor (who accused journalists of "dabbling their fingers in the stuff of other people's souls"), but Wakeham's remark was a half-fallow-well-met clap on the back either. Everyone likes Wakeham. Though a master at party politicking, he is said to be straight-up in dealings with people. When he arrived back in the Commons, four months after the Brighton bomb, he was cheered on both sides. You wonder how the experience af-

fects his personality. "I don't talk much about it," he says. "It does affect me in that I am particularly grateful that I have been able to rebuild my life. It has rounded my character a bit. I am not so argumentative as I was. It has helped me become a better fixer." He is well-known for his sense of humour. The joke potential of our encounter, between a member of the press and the press watchdog is not lost on him. He decides not to talk in his own office, where he would disturb his room-mates. Instead, we sit down in the huge Lords' Royal Gallery. Baroness Smith suggests we move somewhere warmer. "Ah," Wakeham says, "but when it's too cold, they don't stay too long, you see."

He has more fun later on, when asked whether the past year has given him more or less respect for the press. "Probably more," he says, "and strangely enough, more respect for the tabloids. The truth of the matter is that the tabloids are in a highly competitive business, fighting on the very margins of what is possible and what is not possible to say, and very well aware that if they don't run a story, their competition will. And they also know that papers like yours and the Telegraph are sitting there with reams and reams of copy, waiting for the tabloids to commit themselves just once, and then away you go."

This is technically a foul, except that Wakeham is the referee. The consensus, after his first year in the job, is that he has been a good one. He is generally thought to have shown common sense in warning papers in advance to leave Prince William alone at Eton. He is credited with heading off the Government's threat of statutory curbs on press freedom. Even the suspicion that he would betray a Tory bias has melted away. Wakeham says, unabashedly, that this is because he always acts with integrity. "The thing about the world I have operated in is that people trust you because they've trusted you before. If I say to someone as Chief Whip, 'Look you can't have a debate next week but if you lay off, you can have it the following week and what is more, I'll get the Prime Minister to take part in it, I have to believe.'"

But then a few clouds hanging around the offices of the Press Complaints Commission. There is the row over Prince Philip for a start. Last year, Wakeham made the headlines after warning, on the eve of the Princess of Wales's Panorama interview, that those "who voluntarily bring their private life into the public domain... must bear the



Lord Wakeham... 'I am not a Tory grandee. Not that I feel inferior to the Tory grandees. I am one of the few people in politics who started with just £300

consequences of their actions." He says he was not, as critics claimed, arguing for a return to the days when the House of Windsor put up a blank wall against the press. "Maybe it is right to discuss some of these things but you can't then expect newspapers not to join in the discussion. It is up to that individual to set the parameters."

Would he say the same to Prince Charles, after his interview with Dimbleby? "Yeah sure," he shrugs. "It's the same for everybody." Including for Julia Carling whose complaints against the PCC, on the grounds that she "had clearly placed details of her past and current relationships into the public domain by virtue of articles and interviews designed, in part to enhance her image [and] promote her career". It does not, he insists, set any precedent. The PCC, he points out, ruled against the News of the World last year when it used the same argument to defend pictures of Earl Spencer's wife, saying he had surrendered his privacy by inviting Hello magazine into his home.

"That was rubbish in my view," says Wakeham. "He had presented a part of his life — his house and grounds — partly to raise money to keep

the show going, in a perfectly reasonable, civilised fashion. That doesn't therefore entitle the press to take pictures of Lady Spencer in hospital with a telephoto lens. Whereas," he adds, "it was quite clear to us that in the case of Julia Carling, she had courted publicity."

But isn't there a huge difference between volunteering publicity and having it thrust on you? "Sure... and the Commission has to weigh these things up. But in practice it is not that difficult to decipher the action you should take from the sort of publicity someone is after."

This suggests that the Commission sympathised with Earl Spencer for selling his story to raise funds for his house but did not sympathise with Julia Carling for promoting her own career. Is Wakeham saying that the motive of someone who chooses publicity is material to a PCC judgement?

"In so far as the motive is apparent, probably it is material. All I am saying is that a person who seeks publicity runs the risk — no more than that — that it will be harder to defend their privacy. It doesn't mean it gives carte blanche to newspapers."

If the decisions made under his reign seem controversial, he adds, it is for good reason.

"What is quite clearly happening is that newspapers are setting a higher percentage of complaints before they come to the PCC because they recognise that we mean business. But that does mean that the ones we get to adjudicate on are much more difficult."

UNDER his chairmanship, the Commission of 17 members (eight of whom are from the press) manages to reach a consensus ten times a year, on a dozen or so cases a time. "It is a skillful operation," he says, again without false modesty. "I ask people what are the arguments against you? Maybe the differences are very narrow. Some people feel that even to articulate the other person's point of view is to half concede but I believe in rational discussion and good humour." But his reputation as Mr Fixit, he adds, can be a millstone. "The more people call you a fixer, the more difficult it is to be the fixer next time. It makes people highly suspicious."

What hasn't he been able to fix? "Oh well, lots of things. I was campaign manager for Mrs Thatcher for six hours. Six hours after I became her campaign manager, she gave up. So that wasn't very successful." Wakeham entered politics fairly late at the age of 42. His

father was a trained civil engineer later set up his own garage business. Wakeham at first thought of becoming a writer — "my father said it was the best job you could do but then he told me, 'you haven't got any talent'... to write, I mean." Instead, he chose accountancy, working for Arthur Young, where he audited books for oil companies. At 28, he set up his own business, specialising in construction machinery. By the time he entered the Commons in 1974, he was very wealthy. He also had a huge number of directorships — "I had 62 before I went into Parliament". He pruned them down to four, but since retiring from politics, he has been building them up again.

"I can only manage a couple of dozen now," he jokes. (It's actually "eight or nine"). Still, quite a lot of extra jobs for the PCC chairman. "I am a businessman," he shrugs. "I am interested in solving problems." His latest post, which he takes up in June, is the chairmanship of the British Horseracing Board (annual salary £28,000), which has taken over from the Jockey Club in running the sport. Wakeham has talked enthusiastically about reforming the sport away from its elitist past and about how the next chairman might be drawn from the ranks of train-

ers and breeders. At which you can't help pointing out that in the meantime, the sport is dominated by Tory grandees. Wakeham actually shares a coat-peg with Lord Wyatt, chairman of the Tote. "I am not a Tory grandee," he protests. "I am one of the few people in politics who started with £300. Not that I feel inferior to the Tory grandees..." It is true, he concedes, that the chairmanship of the Tote is in the gift of the Home Secretary, but at the BHB, it is an elected post. The division bell now

changes, ending any chance of finding out how Wakeham plans to democratise the racing world. For the press, though, the pressure appears to be off and in the course of nearly an hour, no red cards have been flourished. But when I play back the tape, I note the words he slipped in after summarising his first year in the job. "The object was to persuade everyone that self-regulation could work," he said, "and since last June, the Government has said that it is certainly working, for the moment."

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Sunday in the park with the down and outs

Lottery money may give urban parks a makeover, says PATRICK WRIGHT

JUST as our urban parks are looking their bleak, mid-winter worst, along comes the possibility of £50 million of Lottery money to rejuvenate them, thanks to the National Heritage Memorial Foundation. Yet although many parks still command great loyalty, most are in a very sad state, some abandoned almost entirely to dogs, others used as dumping grounds by the police, keen to keep the disorderly and insane off the streets. Vandalism is rife. The typical inner-city park story is one of wider dereliction in our sense of the public good and yet there can be little doubt that something has gone badly wrong. As leader of the late GLC, Ken Livingstone once pointed out that herbaceous borders, being labour intensive, were early victims of the cuts.

Yet if money is part of the story, urban green spaces are also suffering from our lack of any proper conception as to what they might actually be. Victorian parks once exemplified what could be done to ease the tensions of city life, but in recent decades we have failed to come up with a comparable vision. The innovations we have seen have been piecemeal and as it turns out, imported from elsewhere — the garden festival, the adventure playground, the inner-city farm. We have done very little to adjust our public parks to the changed circumstance of the modern city, or to the fact that the urban population is now both more specialised in its recreational interests, and more diverse than the Victorian public ever was. The present possibilities of the park often seem lost in a cloud of conflicting priorities. Every interested lobby has its own set. The advocates of open spaces are inclined to insist that all open space in the city is good, even though there is plentiful evidence that some urban open spaces are bleak, miserable, underused places, and actually do good to anyone. The playing fields lobby pursues its own bent, reluctant to accept that playing fields may already be in good supply, or that they may absorb a larger proportion of maintenance budget than can easily be justified by their use. There is an equally single-minded green argument that urban parks should be allowed to revert to wilderness, as if these were "natural" places in which people have only a marginal right. History can get in the way



Bench life... city parks are now largely outdated. PHOTO: DAVID SALLIOTT

too. We owe a lot to the Victorian campaigners who fought hard to save so many of our urban open spaces from development, but they also lumbered us with a problem. Their parks were organised around such an exclusive idea of appropriate usage that some 19th century park planners are said to have been surprised to hear that working class people even wanted to visit them. Access of that kind may no longer be the major problem, but the polite visual aesthetics that continue to govern so much thinking about parks may still work against legitimate public interests in the present, discounting any thought of new buildings and dis-trusting any activity beside quiet contemplation. If we are to find a better future for the urban park, then we need to get beyond the vague assumption that all parks are inherently good things. Some open spaces are windswept wastes, no use to anyone. Others would be improved by being devoted to new and specialist uses — including those loud American sports that involve tarmacs and seem particularly offensive to the historically-minded.

The National Heritage Memorial Foundation has broadened its outlook considerably since its first statements on lottery funding, which gave the impression that grants would be confined to the restoration of historic features like hand-stands and railings. The advisory panel, set up to assist in the grant-making, seems to lean heavily towards the historical perspective of the Garden History Society (a criminologist and an avant-garde sculptor should be added immediately), but the guidelines for the Urban Parks Programme try to reach out. They admit new structures — as long as they are "appropriate" and see that play areas and leisure facilities have a legitimate place even in historical parks. More useful now would be a series of initiatives with different kinds of urban park: pilot projects perhaps, which demonstrate what could be done to fit the public park to the present public and its interests. Some historical parks should certainly be preserved, but there will be other places where renewal can hardly be achieved even under this moderately expanded definition of heritage.

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Lava lamp camp

Radio

Lyn Gardner

ONE person's essential information is another's trivia. Lundy, Pastnet, Malin, Hebrides... the shipping forecast, crucial to mariners, is merely part of the sound wallpaper for most Radio 4 listeners. We haven't the foggiest what it really means, but the words are etched like a spell into our subconscious to be dredged up with multiplication tables and nursery rhymes. Listen to any national radio station all day and you are bombarded with information. You may live in Workop but you will know about road works on the Basingstoke ring road as the burst water-pipe causing chaos in Wimbledon; you will know that Lisa in Acton loves Kevin in Northampton, and that Sally Feldman edits Woman's Hour. Sometimes it's hard to tell the difference between the programmes and the fluffy bits in between. Retro is trivia's best friend and radio is hot on retro at the moment. Take Beam Me Up Scotty (Radio 4). John Peel's nostalgic chain through space-age pop culture from Buck Rogers to Space Precinct and Joe Meek to Bowie. This was bursting with information of the kind that could only be possible use to those planning to enter a baby boomers' Trivial Pursuit. It relied on the fact that the listener was going to be so busy saying, "Oh yes, I remember lava lamps: space hoppers, silver mini-skirts watching Dr Who from behind the settee," that nobody would notice we were being fed off with what amounted to little more than a 28-minute list. "We used to believe it was part of a future that was going to happen, that this was how we were going to live," said one contributor.

Wednesday's edition of Cultural Baggage (Radio 3) was on dogs, and nostalgia levels were kept high with KS, Blue Peter's Petra and Barbara Woodhouse. I liked the interviewee who argued that in the East End, your dog is as important as your mum and that the defining moment for the Kray twins was seeing Lassie Come Home. It gave them a sentimental seizure from which they never recovered.

The frustrating thing about this rather neat little series is that all the snippets of music and clips from books, films, TV programmes and interviews are unidentified (you can send for a fact sheet) so you spend as much time playing cultural mastermind and trying to remember the name of that song as actually listening. Monday's concrete subjects such as the doest stand for a work better than the philosophical. Thursday's programme on viruses was hampered by the butterfly format and lack of overall analysis. But if you want facts, at least "Cultural Baggage" offers a way to make a link that the 1918 flu epidemic killed more people than all the wars of the 20th century, that by the year 2000 30 million people will be infected by HIV.

If you're an obsession with trivia (getting out of control you could try a shot of No Job Too Small (Radio 4)), this describes itself as a minutiae and trivia programme. I have listened to it with rapt attention and I think it may be overstepping the mark. It doesn't seem to be about anything at all. This week, presenter Stuart Macdonald said he didn't like parsley, a point of view, but hardly one worth airing. A little discussion about the pros and cons of parsley followed as well as a few facts about the poor, abused herb. Then somebody said that they didn't see the point of rat-cum powder. I can see that this will be a series that will run and run. At least until someone in the BBC is brave enough to say that they don't see the point of it.



Being there... Emma Thompson in Carrington, Ted Danson in Loch Ness and Hugh Grant in The Englishman Who Went Up A Hill But Came Down A Mountain. Now the cinema is proving a British geography teacher, thank to the Movie Map, 250,000 of which have been produced

A large map of the United Kingdom with numerous numbered locations. Surrounding the map are several small black and white photographs of actors and their names: Stephen Frears, Mel Gibson, David Putnam, Terry Gilliam, and Richard Attenborough. To the right of the map is a list of film titles and their corresponding location numbers on the map.

RONALD BERGAN looks at a movie map of the UK

This nation of locations

IF YOU want to see the splendours of Syon House and gardens, fondly recalled from the Madness Of King George, or at the other end of the spectrum, visit the Glasgow warehouse where Shallow Grave was filmed. Help is at hand. For the first time, a Movie Map is available to help you follow in the footsteps of Nigel Hawthorne or Scotland's murderous trio and more than 180 other UK film or television locations. A quarter of a million copies have been produced by the British Tourist Authority and Vauxhall to celebrate the twin centenaries of the cinema and the car industry in Britain. The aim, according to the BTA, which is issuing them free from tourist information centres, is "to use the tremendous international success of these films (Four Weddings And A Funeral, Braveheart, etc) to stimulate travel in and around Britain. The map will help visitors follow in the footsteps of their screen heroes."

It is possible to cross the Forth Railway Bridge as Kenneth More did in the remake of The Thirty-Nine Steps; travel through Gwynedd in Wales, which stood in for China in The Inn Of The Sixth Happiness; and stroll through Covent Garden, though the market in My Fair Lady is no longer there. You could even discover whether the buffet at Camford Station in Lancashire is still as dreary as when Trevor Howard said farewell to Celia Johnson in Brief Encounter. Will tourists hope to find Darcy, his clothes in disarray, materialising in the gardens of Lyme Park in Cheshire where Pride And Prejudice was filmed, or a group of young men in white vests and long white shorts cantering along the beach at St Andrews as they did in Chariots Of Fire? Surely not. There

may be further disillusionment when tourists wander around Loch Ness vainly looking for the non-existent telephone box used in Local Hero, or, on arrival at Hereford, they might find the countryside less turbulent and romantic than James Baxendale's set designs (acres of heather were shipped to the California hills) in William Wyler's Wuthering Heights. "Although filmed on a Hollywood set, the wild, bleak Yorkshire moors of the Pennines surrounding Howarth, are vividly evoked in the movie," the map's notes proclaim. It seems that today's pilgrims would rather visit another country, an inaccessible fantasy world. These elegant illusions, which have been caught in the eye of the camera, can only be observed, never entered.

Under Milk Wood, instead of Laugharne or New Quay — more likely candidates for Dylan Thomas's Llareggub — Fifteen couples have apparently already proposed at the Crown Hotel, Aberystwyth, and others have been clamouring to get married (or buried?) in the five churches featured in Four Weddings. Perhaps this is the only way most people an audience can go beyond the vicarious experience of watching a film to the sensation of actually, in some way, participating in it. But while tourists may enjoy travelling around Great Britain in search of film locations, they will discover that, like the past, film inhabits another country, an inaccessible fantasy world. These elegant illusions, which have been caught in the eye of the camera, can only be observed, never entered.

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Black and white issue

Television

Mark Lawson

THIS week, a group called the Anti-Racism Alliance launched a cinema advertisement with the message "Racism Destroys Lives", trying to prick consciences over the popcorn. By coincidence, a similar exercise is being attempted in the possibly more hostile territory of mainstream ITV drama, where The Ruth Rendell Mysteries: Simisola (Meridian) revolves around the kind of forensic observation that can be made without qualifications, or rubber gloves: the colour of skin.

The English crime novel is a genre which once cheerfully accommodated a novel called Ten Little Niggers, and part of Rendell's point in Simisola was to keep most of the trappings of the form, varying only the character palette. In Chief Inspector Wexford's rural beat of Kingmarkham, there are a few black people, and one of them, the daughter of a local Nigerian doctor, has gone missing. Fiction with a message often amounts to the writer stopping the plot while characters joust slogans. The power of Simisola — the skilful script is by Alan Plater, who was adapting novels for television when Andrew Davies was still in short stories — is that it always the action that invites the reaction.

The body of a young black woman was discovered and DCI Wexford visited the Nigerian GP and his wife to invite them to attempt an identification. George Baker cleverly made you see in this scene that Wexford prided himself not merely on his delicacy with bad news, but on his cultural sensitivity. Here was a cop who had taken his racism awareness course seriously. Cut to the morgue. "That's not my daughter," said the father, and the trap had been set so well that this viewer at least suspected him of mischief and deceit. But Wexford's error, was a nice quessily realised, was a dramatist's error of actually, in some way, participating in it. But while tourists may enjoy travelling around Great Britain in search of film locations, they will discover that, like the past, film inhabits another country, an inaccessible fantasy world. These elegant illusions, which have been caught in the eye of the camera, can only be observed, never entered.

him, so he had failed to check the corpse against a photo. The sequence was a little masterpiece of moral fiction. Even devotees of Brookside (Channel 4) have become worried in the past year by the serial attitude to what Hollywood calls "back story", or the characters' past lives. Mick, for example, seems to have recovered his scally chirpiness faster than you reasonably might expect after being held hostage in your flat by an armed stalker. The producer's ears must have been burning, because last night's edition made strenuous attempts at psychological continuity. Following the death of Australian Shane, Jacqui Dixon's fella, from a heroin overdose, his supplier, Jimmy Corkhill, had a serious case of the flashbacks.

"There's something you should know," he told his gormless son-in-law and deputy pusher, Gary. "This isn't the first time I've killed someone." He briefly summarised 1994's key crime, when the veiled-bled Jacqui's kid brother, Tony, in a smack-fuelled car smash. "Not a single solitary stinking hour doesn't pass," he yelled to Gary last night, "that I don't see Tony Dixon's face." It was a strong line, delivered with credible remorse by Dean Sullivan, but perhaps that double negative was deliberate, for the problem is that nothing in Jimmy's demeanour in the past two years suggests that he had seen Tony Dixon's face since the actor's leaving party. Perhaps dramatic amnesia is a necessary convention in soap opera, particularly one with Brookside's present level of incident. It's increasingly noticeable that almost every single regular character is now at risk of sudden death, whether from murder, suicide, bulimia, amoebic dysentery or over-strenuous exercise.

The word on the street in Liverpool is that executive producer Phil Redmond is reminding his hirings of their dispensability after a couple of spats with temperamental cast members. Whatever the reason, the various plot-swords hanging over the performers make a nice grim joke of the old phrase of prejudice: they really did all look the same to

ELENA HARVEY, aged 13, praises a children's drama

Hearts is the trump

BLACK Hearts In Battersea is a costume drama on BBC1, which is billed as "trilling history lesson" viewing. But though 6 million of are watching it, the critics are ignoring it because it's aimed at children, rather than Jane Austen lovers. Shame on them! The fifth of six episodes will be shown tomorrow at 8.15pm and, in case you've missed out, here is a catch-up guide. Set in the early 19th century, in the fictional reign of James III, Black Hearts In Battersea tells the tale of Lord and Lady Bayswater's baby son, Simon (who later turns out to be the hero) being swapped for the baby son of Eustace Buckle, a fanatical opponent of the king who is deeply involved in a plot to overthrow him and put the Hanoverians on the throne. To do this they must first assassinate the Duke of Battersea. Simon gradually becomes aware of this, and must stop the plot before they kill James III, switch on, sit back, and God save the king!

Simon doesn't even know himself) and attempting to "scrobble" him! What a life! It is well cast, with 18-year-old William Manning as Simon, and 11-year-old Jade Williams as the diminutive but beguiling Dido. Ronald Pickup plays the avid inventor the Duke of Battersea, and his Duchess, who has continual "fits of the vapours", is portrayed by Celia Imrie. It can be melodramatic at times — all the baddies look like baddies and all the goodies look like goodies — but it doesn't really matter because when you are trying to follow a dastardly plot you need to see who's who. Teatime dramas have a very bad image; everyone thinks that they are all the same as Just William. But Black Hearts In Battersea has a very good plot, based on the novel by Joan Aiken (of Wolves Of Willoughby Chase fame) and is very high-quality stuff. Forget the fact that there was no James III, switch on, sit back, and God save the king!

OPERA

Samson et Dalila Covent Garden

THE House was in peak condition for the new young Samson and Dalila stars. The Sidney Nolan cloths were brightly lit — as was David Bintley's refurbished dance-ops in the last scene. Mochinski's production, tightened up neatly by David Edwards, matches the dignity of the Saint-Saëns impressively-wrought score which I have seldom heard sound so appealing. The Covent Garden orchestra was on tip-top form for Jacques Delacôte, who relished both the over-blown Wagnerian languorousness and the hom-

age to Bach of the virtuous Israelite courtier. The Argentinian tenor Jose Cura has the bold physicality and passionate delivery that fit him very well for the central role. He acted well, and was suitably brave and heroic at the top of his voice. Mirella Hatziano, as Dalila, also had a thrilling top, but the tone of her lower mezzo register, where much of the role lies, was less arising. Alan Warner suggested plain homey enthusiasm much more than the magical wiles or violent national fervour called for. Gregory Yurisch as the High Priest of Dagon sounded suitably blood-curdling. At Covent Garden (0171-304 4000) Tom Studdiffe

Royal National Theatre advertisement for the play 'Fools' by Aristophanes. Includes showtimes and venue information for various theatres like Canterbury, Cranbrook, and Brighton.

Michael Billington reviews Stanley Spencer's 'Portrait of the artist'. The review discusses Spencer's artistic style, his relationship with his wife Hilda, and the themes of his work, particularly the spiritual and the domestic.

Advertisement for Kiki Dee's 'Almost Naked' album. Features a photo of Kiki Dee and promotional text for her performance at Covent Garden.

Advertisement for Kiki Dee's 'Almost Naked' album, including showtimes and venue information for Covent Garden.



The Aix and pains of genius



They shared an idyllic Provençal childhood but their intense friendship ended in bitterness.

Cézanne, left, laboured in almost total obscurity as Zola's star rose and rose. RICHARD BOSTON tells their story

IT'S never fun being a new boy. Emile was 13 when he went to the Collège Bourbon in Aix-en-Provence, and in that small, oppressively enclosed town he was an outsider. His father, who had died four years earlier, was Italian; Emile himself did not become a French citizen until he was 21. His widowed mother came from the north of France, where he had spent his early years. At the college the posh Provençal boys called him the *français* — Frenchy — because of his Parisian accent. He also had a slight lisp. He wasn't big but he was bright and something of a swot. All in all he was prime bully fodder. They sent him to Coventry.

There was a slightly older and tougher kid called Paul, also an outsider. He too was of Italian extraction, and he had been born out of wedlock. He did not come from one of the ancient bourgeois or aristocratic families that made up the stuffy Aix society. His father was a rough-tough, self-made man who had worked his way up from making hats to founding the first bank in Aix, and had bought the 45-acre estate of the Jas de Bouffan which in Louis XIV's time had belonged to the Marquis de Villars, the governor of Provence. Emile's family was poor. In the eyes of Aix society Paul's was worse; it was *nouveau riche*.

Neither as a schoolboy nor at any other time in his life did Paul go out of his way to make himself popular. He broke the Coventry ban, chatted with Emile, got into a fight and was beaten up for his pains. The next day Emile thanked Paul by going to his home with a present of a basket of apples. Paul was Cézanne and Emile was Zola.

The population of Aix-en-Provence in the 19th century was only about 25,000. For its grammar school to have produced two major historical figures is like lightning striking in the same place twice. Not only that but it produced them simultaneously, and still more extraordinary was the intensity of their friendship. Books on Zola refer to his schoolboy friend Cézanne, and books on Cézanne refer to his schoolboy friend Zola, as though each was a footnote in the life of the other. There was much more to it than that. The friendship between the two was of David and Jonathan intensity and (albeit with reversals) it was life-long.

Baptistin Baillie is a name that would not be remembered today if he hadn't been the third of the "three inseparables", though his role was always a Ringo-ish one, subordinate to Zola and Cézanne. The three of them would go for long walks in the countryside around Aix; they would pic-

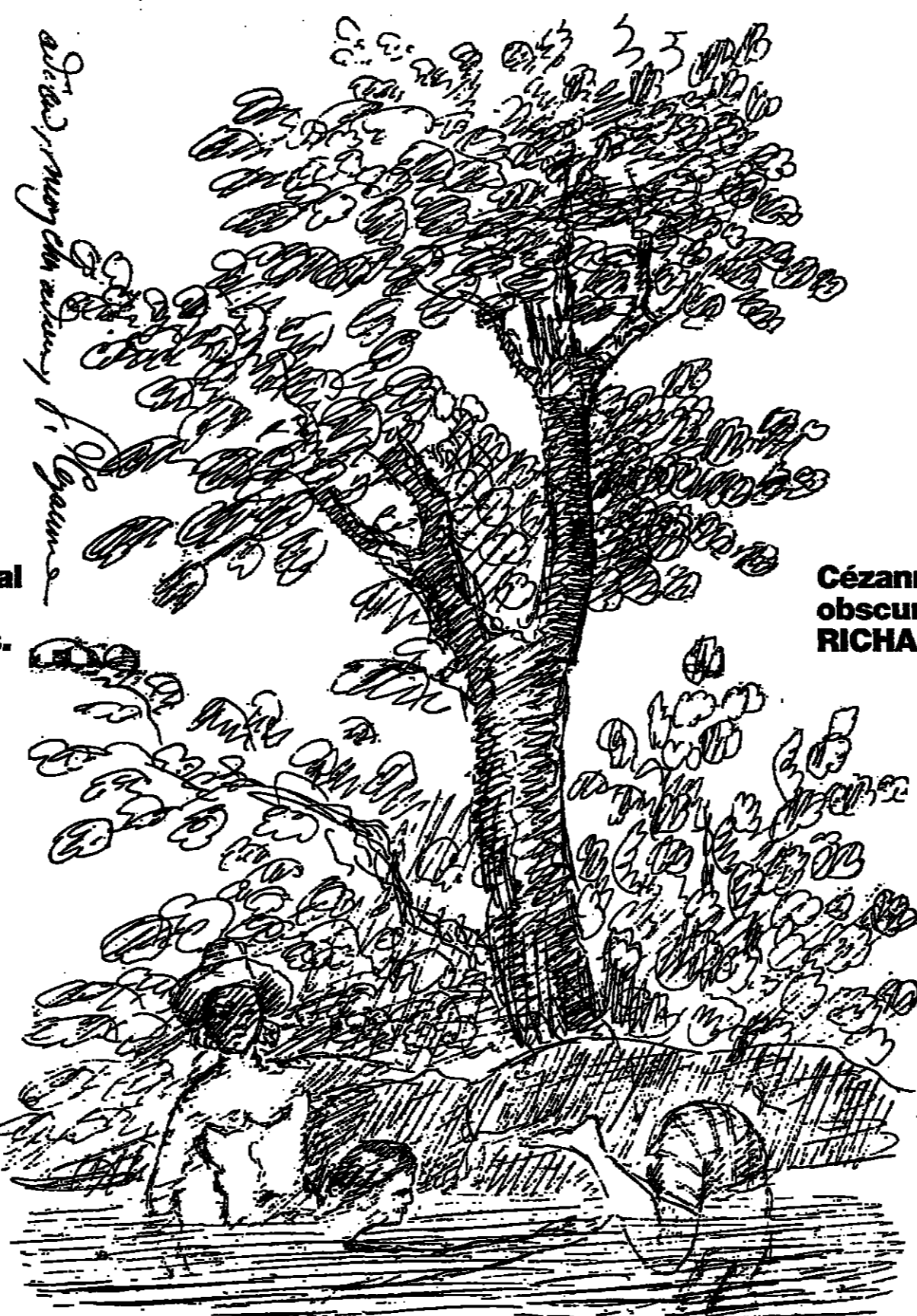
nic; they would swim in the little river Arc. It was an Arcadian existence, an ideal of happiness. At the beginning of *L'Assommoir* there is a description of the hellish Paris laundry where Gervaise labours, and there she remembers being a laundress in Plasans (Zola's fictional name for Aix): "We used to take the washing to the river (Arc). It smelt better than it does here. It was a lovely place, a spot under the trees, with clear, running water."

Gervaise's memories echo the 18-year-old Cézanne's earliest known letter to Zola, written from Aix to Paris. "Do you remember the pine tree which, planted on the bank of the Arc, bowed its shaggy head above the steep slope?" In an autobiographical section of *L'Œuvre*, Zola writes: "They would spend whole days, stark naked, lying on the burning sand, then diving back into the water... They practically lived in the water and sunshine seemed to prolong their childhood."

Both for Cézanne and Zola the memory of those days was a touchstone of happiness (as it was for poor Gervaise). It was always a reminder — a reminder that life could be like this, that life should be like this. Zola tried to recreate it in his riverside house outside Paris at Médan. Cézanne tried to recreate it in his pictures of bathers (with the addition of over-size female nudes, the sheer clumsiness of whom is, I am sure, as much psychological as pictorial).

As well as swimming and picnicking they read voraciously, mostly Victor Hugo and de Musset. They played music — Zola on clarinet, Cézanne on cornet, and with these instruments serenaded a girl until her parents emptied water jugs on them from an upstairs window. They thought a lot about girls. They also planned their careers, and their ambitions were Napoleonic. Zola always spoke of "conquering Paris". Cézanne would "astound Paris with an apple". But first they had to get there.

Those of us from northern Europe or its offshore islands tend to see the South, the Midi, Provence as a place of freedom and enlightenment. We think of Keats's beaker full of the warm South, or of sun-goggles almost blinded by the yellow light and sunflowers of Arles. For Zola and Cézanne, on the other hand, it was a place to get out of. Paris was where it was, at Provence was stilling. But the first thing to get out of was school. They were bright boys. One of them tended to win the writing prizes, the other the ones for drawing. That's right — Cézanne excelled in writing, Zola in drawing.



Water babies: a sketch Cézanne sent to Zola to remind him of childhood days by the Arc with their friend Baptistin Baillie

Both, though, had problems passing the *bac*, the matriculation exam. When Cézanne finally passed, his father made him study law, which he loathed as much as he later hated working in his father's bank. By then Zola had gone to Paris on his own (his penname's name followed later) and now at the Paris Lycée, a on the title page, and in this brotherhood of genius, went inseparably on to posterity".

In his lifetime Cézanne was often referred to as the painter from Aix. Nowadays his huge reputation is based mostly on the pictures he painted in his studio in Aix or in the surrounding landscape, notably Mont Sainte-Victoire. From the almost inept tumult of his early paintings he worked to and achieved such classic calm that you might imagine him serenely contemplating the landscape of Provence and hardly budging from it.

In fact Cézanne was never serene, he was always turbulent and restless. After his first visit to Paris in 1861 there was barely a year in which half of it was not spent in Paris or its neighbourhood, and in the 1870s there are nearly four continuous years spent in the north. Even in his last years he took long trips from Aix. As far as I know he never painted a picture in or of Aix itself. His studios were always outside the town, as were his motifs.

Yet wherever he went he took Provence with him (not least in the form of large quantities of olive oil, an essential ingredient in his favourite soup). Provence was wherever he happened to be at the time. There are paintings done in Chantilly near Paris that could have been done at the Aixois family home, the Jas de Bouffan. The contrary is not the case.

Likewise there is a sense in which Zola also didn't leave Aix — the sense in which Joyce never left Dublin. He made only a few visits South, and then for necessary reasons such as burying his mother next to his father in the Aix cemetery, and to avoid the Franco-Prussian war and its aftermath. But the whole of his great literary endeavour grows out of Aix. The massive 20-volume series of novels begins and ends in Aix (Plasans). The best-known novels (such as *L'Assommoir*, *Nana*, *Germinal*, *La Bête Humaine*) are set in the north but the protagonists are all members of the Rougon-Macquart family which comes from Plasans. They are twigs and branches on a family tree whose trunk and roots are firmly in Aix.

When Cézanne joined Zola in Paris to study art, he met and introduced to Zola the painters later known as the Impressionists, whom Zola was the first to champion in print. Cézanne also introduced Zola to Alexandrine ("Coco") who became his wife, and when they married he was Zola's best man. Zola dedicated his first real book to Cézanne (and Baillie). When Zola became rich and Cézanne's father had halved his allowance, Emile sent

money to Paul and his mistress (later wife) and their son. It was a very close friendship and that was their home town. "Wonderful place, vile people," Zola said repeatedly in one form or another, and Cézanne felt the same. Emile Bernard records him saying that his compatriots were clouds and that he despised them all. "At this point a look of indescribable contempt came over Cézanne's face and he shook his fist at the town of Aix."

Cézanne hated the weather in Aix. His letters rarely fail to mention that the weather is intolerably hot or intolerably cold. From early years, children in the street had laughed at his unkempt appearance. In his last years, diabetic and sometimes suffering from vertigo, his stumbling walk was taken for drunkenness and stones were thrown at him. The director of the local museum, the Musée Granet, declared that while he was alive, no painting by Cézanne would hang there. The man lived till 1921 and he kept his word. At present there are six paintings by Cézanne in the Musée Granet, all on loan from Paris. Aix's treatment of Cézanne has always been shameful.

Zola's reasons for hating the Aixois went beyond being bullied at school. His Venetian father was an adventurer who was also a brilliant engineer in an age of such great French engineers as Gustave Eiffel. He was responsible for the conception and creation of the dam above Aix. The town had been for a moment the conscience of mankind, said Anatole France on behalf of the Académie Française, the august body which had always rejected his membership, as it had Mollière and Balzac.

When Cézanne's housekeeper brought him the news of Zola's death he shouted what can only be translated as "Fuck off, fuck off! Everyone leave me alone!" and locked himself in his studio, inconsolable.

J'Accuse — the city that shunned its brightest sons

IN 1906 a statue of Zola was unveiled in Aix in the presence of his wife Alexandrine and (right at the back) Cézanne. The statue had been left unfinished by another artist, Philippe Solari, who had died earlier that year. Mayor Cabassol, son of Louis-Auguste's partner in the bank of Cézanne & Cabassol, talked about Zola's youth and how in 1858 Zola had left Aix to become a painter we know.

The mayor was followed by Numa Coste, another old school friend who remem-

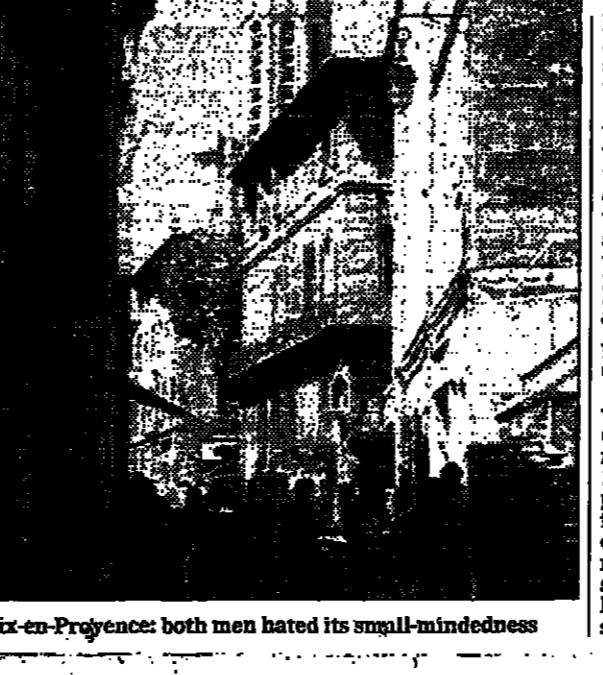
bered "the three inseparables" of those early days: "We were then at the dawn of life... We dreamed of the conquest of Paris... When Zola had preceded the group to Paris he sent his first literary efforts to his old friend Paul Cézanne, at the same time letting us share his hopes. We read these letters amidst the hills, in the shade of the oak trees, as one reads communique of the beginning of a campaign."

By now the tears were pouring down Cézanne's cheeks. The old painter probably couldn't see much of his friends embraced.

Numa Coste and Alexandrine Zola, in front of the bust of Zola made years before by Solari, another old friend who had gone.

Le Bismarck d'Aix reported the event in six lines. This is more than it gave to Cézanne when he died later that same year, an event of which (as far as I have been able to discover) the local paper gave no report at all.

In 1911 another bust of Zola was unveiled in Aix. *Le Bismarck d'Aix* protested that nothing justified this monument to an author who had slandered and libelled Aix when the city



Aix-en-Provence: both men hated its small-mindedness

had no monuments to such as Vauban, Mignet and Thiers. This time there was a riot.

Right-wing demonstrators greeted the unveiling of the statue with deafening whistles, fighting broke out, the police charged and there was a general free-for-all which was only controlled by mounted police backed up by a whole company of the 61st regiment. Twelve members of the proto-fascist Action Française were arrested.

During the second world war the statue was melted down to provide war material for the Nazis. In the 1950s a duplicate statue was presented to Aix. It is to be found (with great difficulty) in the remotest corner of a park on the outskirts. Towns all over France have streets and squares named after Emile

Zola. In Aix, father and son share (again on the outskirts) the Boulevard François et Emile Zola.

In the current edition of the *Green Mitchell* on Provence, the section on literature mentions Henri Bosco, Alphonse Daudet, Jean Giono, Marcel Pagnol and

Peter Bayle. But not Zola. Zola is buried in the Panthéon in Paris alongside Voltaire, Rousseau, Victor Hugo, Jean Jaures and Jean Monin. Cézanne is buried in Aix cemetery in sight of Mont Saint-Victoire, only a few yards from Zola's mother and father.



RICHARD BOSTON, who has been writing for the Guardian on and off for almost 30 years, is working on a book about Cézanne and Zola and their relationship with Aix-en-Provence where he himself spends part of the year. The Cézanne exhibition, the most important survey of the artist's work for nearly 60 years, already seen at the Grand Palais in Paris, opens at the Tate Gallery in London next Friday and runs there until April 28. It includes 90 of Cézanne's paintings and 70 watercolours and drawings.

Paying the price for making it to a ripe old age

Richard Thomas

PROGRESS always comes with a price-tag, and the cost of a longer life is the increased risk of developing a long-term illness. Government actuaries estimate that one in six people will need nursing care in their old age — but only a tiny minority of the population has taken out any insurance against such costs.

As a result, a growing number of retired people are being forced to sell their homes in order to meet care bills. This has caused huge resentment among those who expected the state to pick up the tab. Politicians of all parties are therefore casting around for an answer which does not break the bank.

The latest idea, in a paper from the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) early this week, could just be it. The IPPR advocates Partial Equity Release Insurance Schemes (PERIs), which would allow people approaching retirement to pledge part of the value of their property as an insurance payment against unforeseen care costs.

The report says that a typical couple with a house worth £50,000 would need to promise about 30 per cent to the insurer — £18,000 assuming house prices remain static.

The advantage of this approach is threefold. First, it recognises that selling insurance to young people — who assume that they will be in rude health until the day they die — is virtually impossible. Far better to target those for whom the danger seems more

imminent. Secondly, the person buying the insurance does not have to pay for the policy until after death, which, to some extent, overcomes the barrier of high cost.

Last but not least, the scheme means that even after the insurance company has taken its share, there will be a legacy.

Tony Solomon, marketing manager of Eagle Star, the biggest provider of "crisis care" policies for those who are already ill, said: "It is a superb idea, which should have tremendous appeal."

Munich Reassurance has recently conducted a survey of public opinion towards long-term care which demonstrates the potential popularity of these schemes. Respondents in their 60s were vehemently opposed to paying expensive monthly premiums and the vast majority were also uninterested in paying a lump sum up front. But almost half said they would be interested in partial equity release.

PERIs might well not take off without some risk-sharing between the private and public sectors. One proposal is to pay for any care incurred after the first three years. This would sharply reduce the cost of the policy and improve take-up.

But if PERIs did take off, there could be implications for the housing market. If the insurance company is to receive a fixed share of the house value, then it is clearly in the firm's interest to jack up the market. And, given that many insurers are also mortgage lenders, the mechanism is there too.

Mortgage rates are needlessly high as building societies fall over themselves in the rush to become banks

Home-buyers get raw deal



Housebound... Nikki Gregory was threatened despite DSS help PHOTOGRAPH: ROLAND LEON

Agony of uncertainty adds to misery of repossession

TERESA HUNTER

NIKKI Gregory has lived on invalidity benefits since her work counselling people with drug problems led her to the verge of a nervous breakdown nearly three years ago.

Her health problems were compounded by an earlier bout of recurring malaria. But despite the receipt of Government support to meet her mortgage repayments she has experienced continuing problems with her mortgage lender, the Cheltenham & Gloucester, which has threatened repossession.

A former Turning Point worker, Nikki, aged 50, of Birmingham, said arrears built up during her initial period of sickness, when the Government met only half the repayments on her £30,000 loan. But they were exacerbated by the C&G's

refusal to accommodate the DSS's direct payment system, which has a 18-month annual payment schedule.

The bank demanded 12 monthly payments and refused to accept the DSS's assurances that the shortfall would be made good at the end of the year.

Ms Gregory explains: "I have been honest and up-front as they tell you, but it got me nowhere"

have been honest and up-front with the bank, just like they tell you to be, but it has got me nowhere. Instead, I have been subjected to all kinds of stress, when I was powerless to do anything about it.

"I have received umpteen mixed messages from the

staff telling me one minute that I would soon be facing repossession — the next minute assuring me it would all be sorted out."

The arrears on her £30,000 mortgage have ballooned to £5,000, leaving her with a total debt of £36,000 secured against a property which cost £45,500 at the peak of the house price boom.

Ms Gregory hopes to get back to work soon, but is afraid she could find herself in an even worse position if a new job fails to work out.

She says: "I was working at least 50 hours a week as a counsellor and the work was so gruelling I just burned out. I have to make sure I am really strong before I return — but my big fear is that, following the changes to the mortgage safety net, if a new job didn't work out I would lose the state support for my mortgage. Then I would definitely lose my home."

Margaret Hughes and Cliff Jones

THIS week's figures from the Council of Mortgage Lenders, which show that nearly 1,000 families have their homes repossessed each week, demonstrate how high mortgage rates and falling house prices are still taking their toll on home-owners.

But not on building societies, it seems. The Alliance & Leicester this week announced plans to sell the society for up to £3 billion, and give savers and borrowers five shares of around £750.

This will hardly be welcome news in the 150,000 homes which were dragged into negative equity for the first time last year, pushing the total of families in this unhappy position to 1.7 million.

They will greet with dismay the views of stockmarket analyst Rob Thomas, who believes some of their problems could have been ameliorated if building societies had not overcharged customers during the housing market recession in order to make three times more profits than they needed. He claims they could have cut mortgage rates by as much as 1 per cent. Had they done so, arrears and repossessions would now be much lower.

Mr Thomas claims that the pending sales of the Halifax and Woolwich would not have been possible had societies not been overcharging their customers for the past three years.

With the Alliance & Leicester, Britain's fourth biggest building society, now following the Halifax and the Woolwich in abandoning mutuality to become banks, he believes that remaining societies will have to use their profits to give their customers a better deal if they are to survive.

Alliance & Leicester savers with an open account on December 31 will receive five shares provided they have at least £100 in their accounts at least 56 days before the voting date, towards the end of this year. In this, the society is being more lenient than the Woolwich, which required savers to have at least £100 in

Building society bonanzas

- June 1989** Abbey National converts to bank. Members awarded 100 free shares worth 130p each.
- April 1994** Lloyds Bank announces takeover of Cheltenham & Gloucester Building Society.
- Nov 1994** Halifax & Leeds announces merger and conversion to bank status. Expected pay-out of £600 free shares. Additional pay-outs for bigger savers. Flotation planned early 1997.
- July 1995** Abbey National announces takeover of National & Provincial Building Society. N&P members to get £500 free Abbey shares. Bigger savers to get added pay-out.
- Aug 1995** Quairfrying Cheltenham & Gloucester members receive an average £2,200 cash bonus following Lloyds takeover.
- Jan 1996** Woolwich announces conversion to bank status. Borrowers and savers to receive £700 free shares mid 1997.
- Jan 1996** Alliance & Leicester announces conversion to bank status. Members to receive £750 free shares early 1997, when it beats the Woolwich to the stock market.

their accounts on the last day of 1995 to qualify. But Giro-bank savers and depositors will not qualify.

Rather belatedly, the remaining societies which do not wish to become banks are moving to redress the position. As Brian Davies, chief executive of the Nationwide, now the only major society to remain committed to mutuality, admits: "Perhaps, of late, we have taken loyalty for granted and now it's time to prove what everyone already

Societies will have to use profits to give customers a better deal if they are to survive

knows — that building societies give customers a better deal and will always be cheaper in the long run than banks."

Within the next few weeks the Nationwide will introduce a loyalty package which could involve giving £150 million back to its customers through lower mortgage rates as well as higher savings rates. Britannia Building Society has said it will introduce a similar package in the spring.

Bradford & Bingley will on March 1 begin a scheme in which it will give £50 million profit back to its members. Savings rates, it says, will remain a quarter per cent higher than rival societies, and borrowers will benefit from a standard variable mortgage rate of 7.24 per cent.

The Consumers' Association has warned savers that if building societies disappear interest rates for savers will fall. A report published this week claimed that smaller mutuality have paid better rates of returns on their savings. The "Which" report predicted that investors in building societies-turned-banks would see their savings rates fall.

In a bid to promote the benefits of mutuality, the Northern Rock this week scrapped its infamous early redemption penalties following complaints by borrowers. They were angry at being subjected to penalties — which had not been agreed at the outset — of two months' interest if they paid off their mortgage in the first seven years. Elsewhere, the Halifax is for the first time to pay fees to brokers.

Competition in the mortgages market remains intense. The Nationwide cut its fixed-rate mortgages by 0.75 per cent. Borrowers can fix at 4.99 per cent for two years, 6.24 per cent for three years and 7.39 per cent for five years. Coventry Building Society is offering a two-year rate fixed at 3.95 per cent or a rate of 6.7 per cent fixed for four years.

Savings rates on a slippery slope

Cashpoints

THE recent cut in base rates has begun to hit bank and building society savings returns.

Abbey National is reducing the rates across the range of its investment accounts by 0.25 per cent. Savers with £10,000 on deposit in its now quaint-sounding High Yield Bond will get 5.15 per cent before tax and 3.86 per cent

net, rising on a sliding scale to 6.45 per cent (4.5 per cent net) on balances of at least £200,000.

Net rates on its investment account now start from 2.4 per cent (3.2 per cent gross) on a minimum deposit of £500.

Savers will have to deposit at least £25,000 to see a real return on their investment. On this amount, the account pays 4.66 per cent gross, which works out at 3.49 per cent after tax. This is at a time when inflation is running at 3.2 per cent a year.

The Alliance & Leicester has set up a new 90-day notice account paying 3.07 per cent net (4.1 per cent gross) on a minimum deposit of £1,000, rising to 5.4 per cent net (7.2 per cent gross) on investments of at least £100,000.

DIRECT Line, the Royal Bank of Scotland's armchair banking offshoot, is offering returns of 4.6 per cent gross (3.45 per cent net) on a minimum opening deposit of £1,000. Investments of at least £10,000 earn 5.6 per cent gross (4.2 per cent net). Savings of £25,000 or more will return 6 per cent gross (4.5 per cent net).

NATIONAL Counties Building Society, based in Epsom, has launched its own Visa credit card, with an introductory interest rate of APR 18.9 which goes up to APR 18.9 from July 31, 1998. There is no yearly fee and card-holders have up to 8 weeks' interest-free credit on purchases.

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SCOTTISH WIDOWS

Caught by the companies with an urge to demerge

Ian Wylie

HANSON may be the latest in a line of conglomerates to follow the demerging fashion, but the trend has caught the Inland Revenue on the hop as Pep investors consider the tax implications of "demerged" shares.

When Hanson demerges, shareholders will receive shares in three separate companies specialising in chemicals, energy and tobacco, while retaining shares in Hanson, which will concentrate on construction. Shares in the chemical group are likely to be listed on the New York stock market only.

Aside from any share price implications, the demerger throws up a number of complications for investors who hold Hanson shares within a Pep, particularly those with single company Peps. On top of the £5,000 general Pep tax allowance, a tax-free Pep can also be wrapped around a further £3,000 invested in the shares of one company.

If shareholders approve the

spin-offs, Pep investors are likely to have to choose which share they wish to hold as their single company share. Since investors are not permitted to hold US stocks within a Pep, Hanson investors will certainly have to begin by removing the chemical group shares first. If the shares are sold, investors must reinvest the proceeds in their single company share within 42 days or risk losing their tax relief. Alternatively, investors may want to retain the US shares outside the Pep, but they would forfeit a proportion of their Pep tax allowance as a result.

With regard to the remaining three shares, Pep investors will probably have to choose one to be their single company Pep share, off-load the others and reinvest the proceeds in their chosen share within the 42-day limit. However, the Inland Revenue says the Pep status of shares will depend on how Hanson constructs the relationship between the four companies after they are demerged. A spokesman for the Inland Revenue admits it is entering "uncharted waters" on the implications of demergers.

When ICI hived off Zeneca in the summer of 1993, investors were allowed to hold both shares within the same single company Pep. However, the Inland Revenue is stressing that this should not be taken as a precedent.

A Hanson spokesman said the company was holding discussions with the Inland Revenue to iron out Pep details by the end of the summer, when the first demerger is likely to take place.

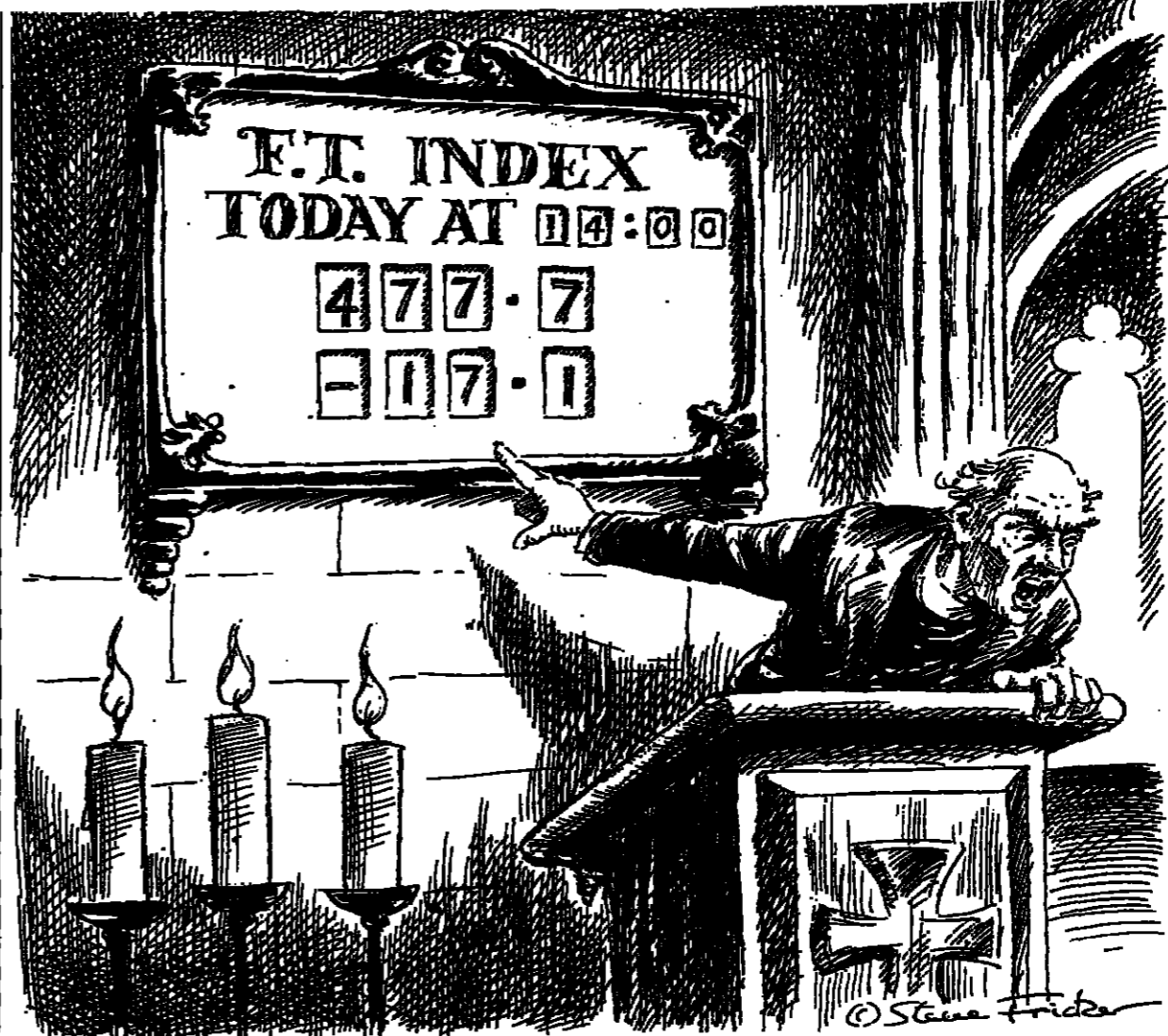
Hanson shares have been traded heavily in recent months, prompted by speculation that the 74-year-old Lord Hanson was likely to take steps to halt the conglomerate's decline before he retires as chairman next year. According to Chase de Vere, £1,000 invested in Hanson shares two years ago with gross income reinvested would now be worth just £946—a loss of 8 per cent which places Hanson 92nd in the league table of FTSE 100 shares.

Yet Hanson shares have proved popular with investors following the "O'Higgins principle"—a theory devised by an American fund manager who

claims to have found a mechanism for choosing shares which out-performs the market consistently. Pep managers who follow the theory choose blue-chip shares which are high-yielding, but low-priced.

Around 8,000 investors hold Hanson shares in single company Peps as part of the Johnson Fry Hyl Pep plan which uses the O'Higgins principle. Johnson Fry employs an automatic share selection system which picks out the 10 FT-30 shares with the highest dividend yield, then selects the share with the second-lowest price. The share is held for a year and then the selection process is automatically repeated. According to Johnson Fry, the Hyl system would have out-performed the FT All-Share index by an average of 16.5 per cent per year over the past 25 years.

For the past two months, Hanson has been the Hyl selected share. Johnson Fry's Alistair Altham says Hyl Pep managers are likely to sell Hanson shares when the demerger takes place and replace them with the next share on the selection list.



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Stockbrokers tell poor churches: 'Now let us pay'

Nick Pandya

CHURCH of England parishes strapped for cash have found a saviour in the Share Centre stockbroking firm.

The Share Service for Christians will offer competitive dealing rates and arrange a donation of 30 per cent of the commission charged to the parish of an investor's choice.

The broker charges 1.3 per cent of the value of the bargain subject to a minimum fee of £15, of which the nominated parish will get £4.50.

On share trades worth £5,000, the broker's commission works out at £65 with the chosen parish receiving £19.50.

There is a facility to amalgamate family shareholdings into a single trade at £2.50 per person plus normal dealing charges.

The new service is undergoing field-tests in the Oxford area, and chief executive Gavin Oldham says the Share Centre is willing to extend the new dealing service to Christians of all denominations around the country.

The broker also offers a Pricewise service which enables investors to specify the maximum price they

are prepared to pay for shares when buying, and the minimum price they are prepared to accept when selling. Charges for putting the deal on hold to get the pre-set price vary. There is no fee for the first month, thereafter it will cost £2.50 a month for the next three months.

Share-owning Christians are urged to re-evaluate their portfolios to check if they might unwittingly be holding shares in companies that violate the tenets of their faith.

For instance, people with shares in oil giant Shell who are disenchanted with that firm's activities in Nigeria may want to swap their holding through the Share Centre for a stake in another company, boosting their local church funds in the process.

Church members involved in investment clubs could also use the Share Centre's new service to buy or sell shares for the benefit of their parish finances.

But remember that the broker offers an execution-only service whereby it acts on investor instructions and does not give advice on which shares to buy or sell.

For further information from the Share Centre on freephone 0800-800-008.

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Regulator is accused of getting capital costs wrong in price review and halving the company's profits

BT attacks Oftel's figures

Nicholas Bannister
Technology Editor

BRITISH Telecom warned yesterday that up to half its profits could be wiped out by an incorrect calculation in Oftel's proposals for the next price review.

BT claimed that the estimate by the regulator, Oftel, of the group's cost of capital, at between 9 and 13 per cent, was far too low as a result of incorrect tax computations and insufficient allowance for increasing risks. It insisted that the correct figure was between 16 and 18 per cent.

BT's warnings came in its official response to Oftel's consultative documents on the next price review and on special measures to outlaw anti-competitive behaviour.

Mr McCarthy-Ward said price restrictions on national calls and private circuits should go in 1997, and on international calls and private leased networks in 1998, when the European market would be open to full competition.

The group insisted nevertheless that Oftel's plans to include a catch-all clause in its licence outlawing anti-competitive behaviour would need an appeal process.

For example, the regulator believed that BT's failure to introduce number portability was anti-competitive.

EMU 'is once and only effort'

Convergence signposts... Swiss policeman guards entrance to congress centre where World Economic Forum is meeting

LARRY ELLIOTT in Davos on tough talking by Bundesbank

BUNDESBANK president Hans Tietmeyer gave a stark warning yesterday of the dangers of a single currency. He said there was only one chance to get monetary union right.



PHOTOGRAPH PATRICK AVIOLAT

Yves-Thibault de Silguy, the European commissioner with responsibility for the single currency.

Mr Trichet said the possibility of a hard core taking the lead had been envisaged in the Maastricht treaty.

Both he and Mr Tietmeyer said that the European Commission needed to work on the details of the stability pact — the arrangement for harmonising the fiscal policies of countries joining monetary union.

Mr Trichet said fiscal policy needed to be coherent and there was "the possibility of sanctions, including fines" against those governments that undermined credibility by being too lax.

Speaking on regulation in the wake of the Barings collapse, Mr Davies said too many firms had over-complex management systems that made supervision difficult, and an attempt should be made to consolidate the number of places where trading took place.

MoD blamed as Yarrow yard sheds 650 jobs

Simon Beavis
Industrial Editor

DEAYS by the Ministry of Defence in placing orders for warships yesterday provoked Yarrow, the Clydeside shipyard owned by GEC, to announce 650 job losses and warn that hundreds more jobs in the beleaguered industry were under threat.

US rise in unemployed surprises analysts

Mark Tran in New York

THE sharpest rise in the jobless total for nearly six years yesterday added to fears that America may be heading back into recession.

Apple chops top of tree to make way for new chief

Computer maker derails Diesel. Mark Tran reports from New York

APPL Computer, the loss-making PC maker, was yesterday poised to oust its long-suffering chief executive officer, Michael Spindler.

EMI soars in hope of early demerger decision

Lisa Buckingham

NEARLY £150 million was added to the market value of Thorn EMI yesterday on speculation that the group would announce details of a multi-billion pound demerger along with its interim profits at the end of this month.

Davos Notebook

Infantry loses out in battle of dole



Larry Elliott

FOR as long as anyone can remember, Switzerland has been a haven for those on the run; a mountain retreat for prisoners of war or deserters fleeing from European conflicts while life has gone on untouched and untroubled in the high Alps.

There are, however, a few straws in the wind — signs that once again it may be left to the Americans to save the Europeans from themselves.

William Bennett, George Bush's drug czar and now a pillar of the new right, opened the conference with a lecture that dwelled on the way in which not only industries but people had been hollowed out by the deflation of market forces.

Mr Bennett, bemoaning the lack of religious faith and virtue in modern capitalist societies, dwelled on the American talk shows where people are routinely hauled out in front of prime-time audiences.

Yet this is not what the free-market theorists promised. Their model was based on the idea that active government, full employment and the regulation of capital produced an affluent society, crippled by dependency. The opposite is, of course, true. It was employment that allowed people to fend for themselves and make their own choices.

From time to time, such heresies found a voice yesterday, but tended to be greeted like a conscientious objector in the backstreets of Manchester in July 1916. Those, like the finance director of a leading UK bank, who wondered why people were begging a living on the streets of New York when there was a desperate need for a descent into the trenches, were very much in the minority.

Ultimately, these two strands — the pressure to put Europe back to the club and the need to safeguard the environment — will be welded together by policy makers with vision. But for now there is no talk of policies designed to foster growth and jobs, no suggestion that there should be active measures to promote greater equality within and between societies, no conception that ultimately unreformed global capitalism may devour itself.

It would be pleasing to be able to report that a serious challenge is being mounted to this numbing orthodoxy. But there isn't. The theme this year is of sustaining globalisation, and the success of free market capitalism is illustrated by the fact that even the North Koreans are in town, seeking meetings with running dogs of imperialism. The Cubans are in Davos, too, des-

News in brief

BA-Alitalia pact in air

Alitalia is in talks about British Airways taking a stake in the Italian carrier, according to an Alitalia union official. BA declined to comment.

A&L limits payout

Tessa savers with the Alliance & Leicester will not be entitled to free share payout if they withdraw their money after their account matures. The society says savers who put their money in its follow-on Tessa or took no action when their account matured would benefit when it becomes a bank in mid-1997. Girobank account holders will not benefit from the payout.

Crash course

The number of company insolvencies fell last year from 16,728 to 14,536 but the British Chambers of Commerce warned that the ratio of insol-

ventories to the stock of companies did not fall and that the rate of individual bankruptcies was more than double what it was five years ago.

PPP prepares float

Private medical insurer PPP is paying the way for a stock market flotation within the next three years. The first step, involving the group abandoning its provident status to become a limited company, was being planned, PPP confirmed yesterday. Under its current status PPP is run for the benefit of insurance policy holders.

Sainsbury presses on

Sainsbury is to continue its January Savers price promotion with the launch on Sunday of February Bonus, maintaining special offers on a small range of products including top brands. Tesco is to respond with its first TV advertising campaign for months.

TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS			
Australia 1.96	France 7.50	Italy 2.550	Singapore 2.11
Austria 15.30	Germany 2.20	Malta 0.5425	South Africa 5.38
Belgium 45.00	Greece 368.00	Netherlands 2.475	Spain 164.00
Canada 2.025	Hong Kong 11.50	New Zealand 2.21	Sweden 10.47
Cyprus 0.7025	India 53.35	Norway 9.05	Switzerland 1.70
Denmark 8.52	Ireland 4.95	Portugal 228.00	Turkey 91.291
Finland 6.56	Israel 4.75	Saudi Arabia 5.64	USA 1.4825

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5.10 departure to uncertainty

Nervous Tories are pushing through rail sale with hope of making it irreversible. KEITH HARPER reports

BITISH Rail officials go private from 2am tomorrow. This is the moment chosen by Whitehall mandarins to place three sections of the passenger network in company hands.

Only an enthusiastic posse of hardened anarchists will be up to observe the transformation of Britain's best-loved Aunt Sally institution — other parts of which will don their new, private coats between now and April next year, provided the Government lasts its full term until then.

Having survived the Save our Railways Campaign in the High Court before Christmas, ministers are pressing ahead to thwart an incoming Labour government's chances of re-nationalising the railways. The Transport Secretary, Sir George Young, is gearing up to privatise many of the remaining 22 passenger franchises in the next 12 months.

own's Britain's rail infrastructure, the sell-off will muddle along peacefully, without impacting on the public's conscience.

The object is to sell Railtrack for a song. It assets were originally valued at £2.5 billion in April 1994 when its assets charges were set. Now the talk is of selling it for a quarter of that or even less, in a grotesque write-down of the business. City and industry sources suggest that the Government would be happy with £1.5 billion, but if £2 billion is secured that will do very nicely.

This is financial engineering of the highest quality, but the City is used to selling anything if the price is right. The Government has been looking at the option of buying the public into buying shares, perhaps by special travel concessions. This has not pleased the new train operators.

Railtrack's debt, too, will have to be written off before the flotation. It has already been reduced to £1.2 billion, by creative accounting. And once it goes altogether, the sale will become more attractive — even though Railtrack's financial advisers, SBC Warburg, admit that the scope to "grow the revenue line in the near term" is limited. The sell-off of stations and property it owns is regarded as having the best potential to generate profits.

fresh ideas and anxious to please, will try to make their mark with the passengers. They have persuaded the Government to advance the hand-over by more than a month, but they will not be able to hide the fact that they are operating a railway suffering under investment. It will lean on the taxpayer for years to come.

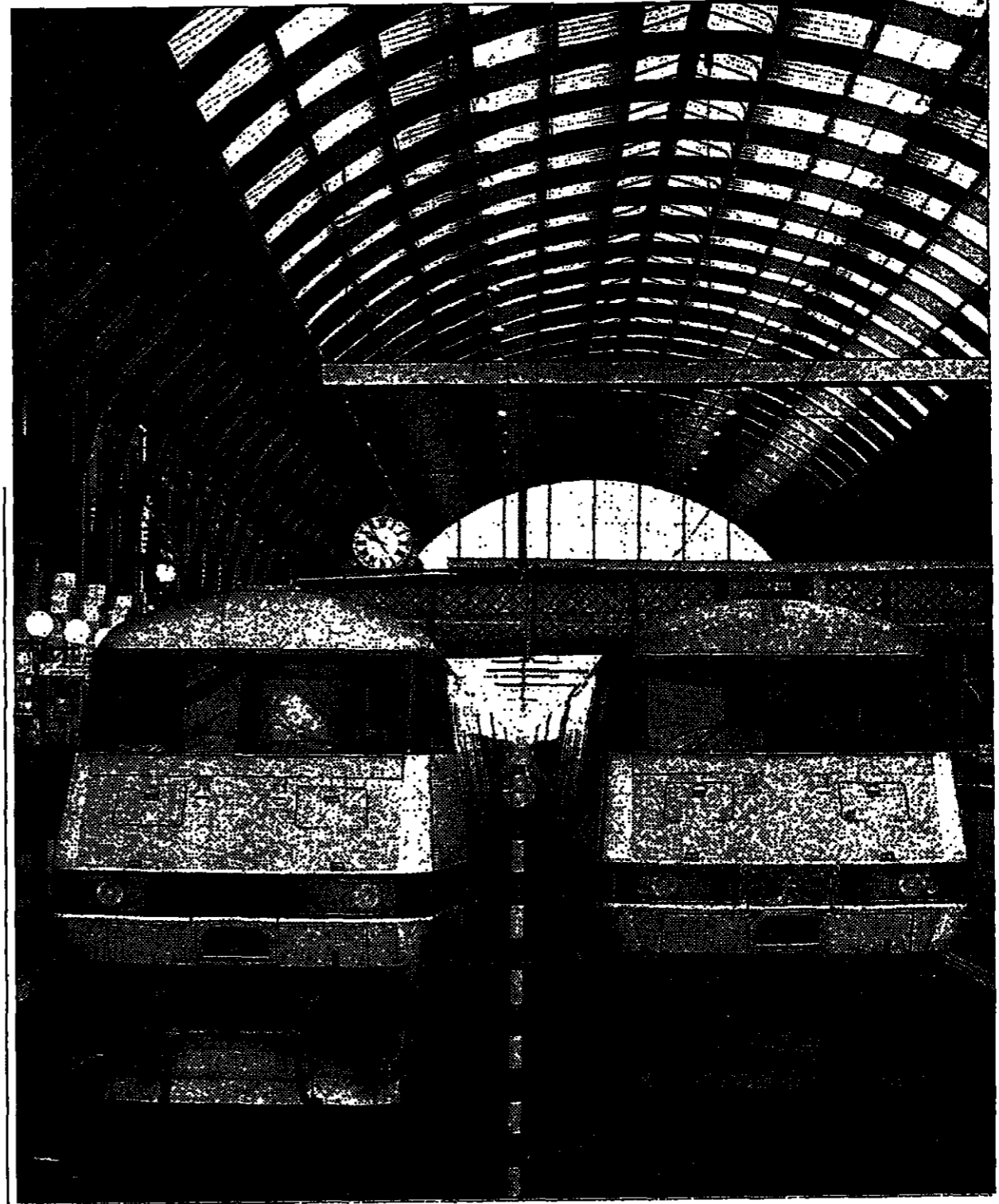
The Government is taking a calculated chance. It knows this privatisation is not popular, but is determined to proceed, as speedily as possible, to spell an incoming Labour government's chances of returning rail to public ownership. Until recently, it looked as if its timetable was slipping, but further sell-offs of crucial parts of BR's old empire before April next year could quash Labour's pitch.

For months, Labour has been nervous about calling its hand. This has been partly due to frequent changes in the party's transport portfolio, and partly because New Labour has been over-cautious about committing itself to spending millions on re-nationalisation.

At one stroke, Labour could undermine the Government's entire privatisation strategy. At its heart is the flotation of Railtrack, which — after doubts by several ministers — is to go ahead at full tilt with a public and international share offer on May 20. To kill off would-be investors, both at home and abroad, Labour need only make a public declaration to Railtrack that it would be re-nationalised. The Liberal Democrats have already made such a commitment, but Labour is dithering, largely because of shadow Chancellor Gordon Brown's insistence that Labour would make sure that the industry is tightly regulated.

This week, Labour's deputy leader, John Prescott, and Clare Short, transport spokesman, have been pressing for a more positive approach by the party, but have foundered on Mr Brown's obduracy. They have failed to twist its arm and were left last night expecting their indecision at a meeting of the Rail Study Association in London.

Brian Wilson, Labour's transport spokesman, who has been seriously at odds with Mr Brown and is being courted by the Conservatives, has been concerned at a backlash from the rail unions, who were aggressive but revealed nothing new about Labour's tactics. He invited "potential investors" in Railtrack to stay clear of "this high risk, utterly unwanted



Ready for the off... about-to-be-privatised trains at Kings Cross station, London

PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID SILLITOE

Train chiefs spell out plans

Keith Harper

TWO of the three new rail passenger company heads unveiled their strategy this week to an enthusiastic meeting of the London railway passenger group. They offered fresh ideas and a better service and were applauded, but with reservations on how far they could deliver.

Brian Scott, managing director of Great Western Rail, heads the management buy-out team which has been awarded a seven-year franchise. It could be extended to 10. His motto is: "Go for growth and empty the M4." He guaranteed trains into Cornwall at their current level, a daily service to Carmarthen, and the Fishguard boat train at least until 1999.

There will be a 30-minute service to Cardiff and Bris-

tol from Paddington, and "an attractive new timetable this summer". A porterage service is being introduced at Paddington.

A sleeper service will be maintained to Penzance, and a motorail service to Cornwall was promised. The company could divide an eight-carriage train in two, providing more frequent services. Employee participation is to be encouraged.

Mr Scott wants to introduce tilting trains to improve on journey times. The company aims to answer all correspondence within five days, instead of 10, and a new passengers' charter will compensate travellers if they are delayed more than an hour. The number of cycles allowed on a train will be doubled to six.

Chris Kinchen-Smith, managing director of Enterprise Rail, responsible for

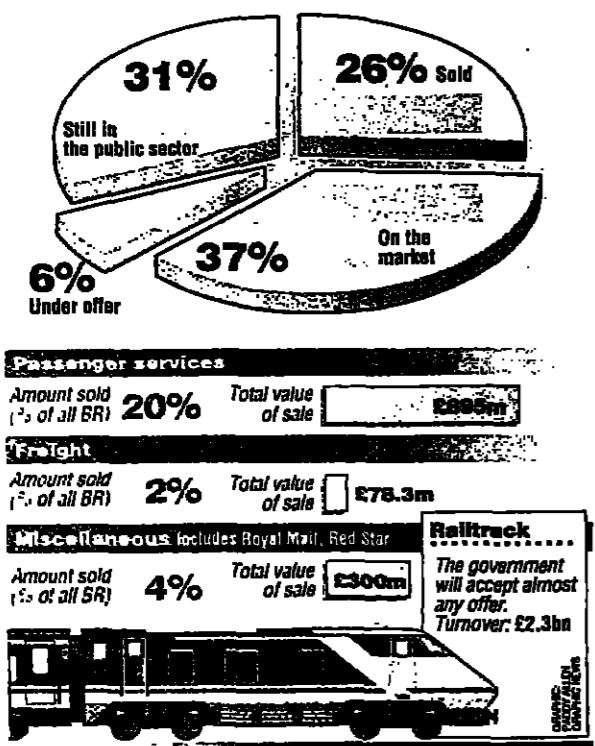
the London, Tilbury and Southend line, promised "the utter transformation" of this heavily criticised commuter route. He aims to improve punctuality from 82 per cent to 90 per cent from October this year.

There will be two new trains after 10 o'clock at night and new information systems. Given the improvements the company is looking for, fares should increase by only 0.7 per cent each year.

New rolling stock is to be ordered within a year, which under the privatisation rules gives the company a 15-year contract instead of its current seven. The timetable will not be reduced, and "we will not be putting the boot into our staff". Mr Kinchen-Smith added: "Our passengers are not interested in ideology. They just want a good service. This Cinderella railway will get to the ball."

Going, going...

How far the British Rail privatisation has gone.



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Age of the virtuous ad

Roger Cowe

VIENTNAM this week launched a campaign against what it describes as "social evils and cultural poisons." This catch-all includes prostitution, as it would in most countries. Sensibly, it also covers karaoke bars, goes on to embrace gambling and consumer goods advertising, which many in the West find positively virtuous.

The effect is, for a time at least, that billboards promoting companies such as Sony and Kodak, and European foods, have been painted over, covered up or dismantled. The campaign to preserve Vietnamese culture also requires western names to be subsidiary to their Vietnamese equivalents.

Some cynics have dismissed the campaign as electioneering ahead of the Communist party congress, expected in June. And it seems unlikely that Vietnam can resist the tide of western commercial and cultural imperialism as successfully as the country fought off the military version. But there is clearly something to be said for fighting social evils. As the minister of culture, Tran Hoa, put it: "We have to fight against immoral things that may cause negative influences."

Few can argue with that, but of course there are different views of immorality and "negative influences". In Britain, as in most western countries, that would tend to be interpreted as illegal drugs — cocaine, heroin, ecstasy, etc. But there is a strong voice in the European Union's debates on advertising, arguing that many mainstream aspects of western commerce are immoral and "may cause negative influences".

The first target must be tobacco. Even the most fervent smokers can hardly claim that there are serious positive influences from smoking. The ministry of health should not find it difficult to explain why tobacco is "immoral" and to warn of this "social evil" — as the Vietnamese might describe tobacco if they weren't so addicted to it. Tobacco is easy, but it is not so easy to know where to stop. Alcohol is probably next on the list, although the drinks industry has done a good job of trying to prove that a few drinks are actually good for you. And then there is toy advertising, much criticised by many parents and even frowned upon by some ad agencies.

But toys themselves are clearly not a social evil. They have very positive influences on children's development, despite what some might think about Game Boys and other modern toys. It is advertising itself that injects the "negative influences" by showing children with consumption messages.

Perhaps the answer is to turn the potency of advertising towards social virtues. Unfortunately, however, copywriters never come up with anything as excitingly virtuous activities.

Witness the slogan, reported in Hanoi this week, proclaiming: "Protection against poisonous cultural items is the duty of all society." It doesn't quite have the ring of "it could be you" or even "Come to Marlboro Country".

There is another problem, too. Unlike in Vietnam, there are no votes to be gained from campaigning against social evils and cultural poisons.

Quick Crossword No. 8039

Across

- 1 Marine (8)
- 5 Go ahead — metal — van (4)
- 9 Dried coconut (5)
- 10 Feeler (7)
- 11 Politician — opposed to change (12)
- 13 University — shos (5)
- 14 Set fire to (5)
- 17 Russian president (5,7)
- 20 Detonate (7)

Down

- 1 Staff — club — spice (4)
- 2 Censure (7)
- 3 Sinner (12)
- 4 Scarce (6)
- 6 Boredom (5)
- 7 Breadth of circle (8)
- 8 Recycled (12)
- 12 Mexican hat (8)
- 15 Introductory — letter (7)
- 16 Strict (5)
- 18 Answer (5)
- 19 An expression — for part of the school year (4)

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